

ALINA DERLAY; OR THE TWO CAPS.

A TALE.

BY MISS LESLIE.

PART THE FIRST.

ALINA Derlay was not two years old when she lost her mother, who died suddenly at the early age of nineteen. The family, being about to embark for England, were then on a farewell visit to Dr. and Mrs. Wendover, who resided at a small town in the interior of Pennsylvania. Mrs. Wendover was the maternal aunt of Winslow Derlay, and before her marriage she had lived many years at his father's house. Of her kindness to him in his boyhood he had always cherished the most grateful remembrance. And the intelligent and amiable Mrs. Derlay, in whose affection for the man of her heart there was not one atom of selfishness, loved him too well not to love also those that were dear to him. Instead of regarding with a jaundiced eye her husband's relatives, as is too often the case with young wives, the medium through which she saw them was always *coulcur de rose*.

The unexpected death of his beloved Laura overwhelmed Winslow Derlay with the most poignant anguish: and the shock was so great that he never recovered from it. His spirits sunk to revive no more, and his health began slowly but surely to decline. He felt that his days were numbered. Nevertheless as soon as he was able to think of anything like worldly business, he prepared again for his voyage to Europe; from which he had a prospect of realizing something that, in case of his death, would insure an independence for his motherless little girl. Mr. Derlay was easily persuaded to yield to the entreaties of his uncle and aunt Wendover, and leave in their care his almost infant child: at least till she should be old enough to have secured a good constitution by passing her earliest years in country air and country happiness. The little town of Brookfield was in a remarkably salubrious situation: and Dr. Wendover, who was an excellent physician, found leisure (notwithstanding he had all the practice of the place) to superintend the cultivation of a small but valuable farm that had been left to him by his father; the dwelling-house being the very last on the main street of the village. His two sons, the children of a former marriage, had long since removed with their families to a wider field of enterprise: one to the banks of the Ohio: the other to the Genesee country. Mrs. Wendover, who had married late in life, and was the very best of step-mothers and step-grandmothers, grieved much at their departure: and both she and her husband felt the want of some youthful being to enliven their

house, and excite in them a new and daily interest now that their own children and grandchildren were far away. People of kind hearts and generous feelings have such a *besoin d'aimer* that they are rarely happy unless they enjoy the gratification of cherishing some object to whose comforts and pleasures they can contribute, and on whose affection they can depend.

Winslow Derlay took an agonised leave of his little daughter, and returned mournfully to Philadelphia, at which place he resided; and where he had become the junior partner of a house engaged in a flourishing business. He embarked at New York for England: where he exerted himself beyond his strength in attending to the affairs that brought him thither. Early in the ensuing winter a violent cold, acting on an enfeebled constitution, brought him in a few weeks to the grave.

He died at the house of his cousin, Seaford Rochdale, who with his family had been for some years a resident of London. To Mr. Rochdale the unfortunate Derlay left the guardianship of his little Alina, and the care of some property which was worth at that time about fifty thousand dollars, and which was to be her's at the age of twenty-one. He desired in his will that she should not be removed from Brookfield till she had completed her ninth year: and that after she had ceased to be a settled inmate of their house, her affection for her aunt and uncle Wendover should be cultivated by frequent visits, and by frequent letters when separated.

Alina Derlay was just nine years old when the Rochdale family returned to Philadelphia. In about two months after their arrival, Mr. Rochdale went to Brookfield, (having previously written to Dr. Wendover) and found the little girl well and happy; the darling of her old uncle and aunt, and deriving her chief enjoyments from reading all the books she could obtain, and from petting all sorts of living things. It was with extreme grief that the good Wendovers gave up their youthful charge to Mr. Rochdale: and it was long before the old lady could be persuaded that Alina would in any possible way be benefited by the change. But the doctor seeing farther and clearer, succeeded at last in convincing his wife that it would be better for the heiress of fifty thousand dollars to have the advantages of a polished education, and an introduction into such society as can rarely be found except in a large city.

"You know, my dear Elsey," said he, "you and I are very old-fashioned people, and so are all our

associates: for Brookfield is a very ancient town (having been settled before the revolution), and being quite inland, and having no water-power, it is still joggling on in an easy primitive way, without troubling itself much with improvements. Now, though at your age and mine, there is no harm in being old-fashioned, still I doubt if it would be well for Alina to grow up an old-fashioned girl. And then, you know, as we live but a day's journey from Philadelphia, she can easily come and see us: and perhaps, now that we have so powerful a motive for leaving home, we may go sometimes and see her."

The little girl was almost broken-hearted at the idea of leaving her kind uncle and aunt, notwithstanding that they magnanimously represented to her the delights of Philadelphia, and the enjoyments of Philadelphia children. But she could not conceive any greater happiness than that of staying always with them in her own home, (as she called it,) with her own little flower-garden, and her numerous pets, of whom she would gladly have taken a cart-load away with her. She went out into the barn-yard to select a chicken to carry to the city; but not being able to decide between gray-speckled Kitty and yellow-speckled Fanny, she concluded on taking both. The three white kittens (whose aunt she called herself) were also to accompany her; for as one kitten by itself is never so frolicsome as when there are several, and as they mew when separated, Alina resolved on conveying them all to Philadelphia. Her little monthly rose-bush, and her little orange and lemon-trees that had grown from seeds planted by herself, were also to go with her, pots and all. She besought Mr. Rochdale to stay till the two squab-pigeons were sledged, that she might see if they had fan tails; and till the four little puppies had their eyes open, that she might look at them playing about, if it was only for one day.

Mr. Rochdale kindly assured Alina that if she still desired all these things after she went to Philadelphia, they should be replaced by others as like them as possible. But the tears rolled down her cheeks as she said "that these would not be the same things that she was accustomed to loving." He tried to convince her that in a short time she would find herself loving her new pets quite as much as the old ones. This the affectionate little girl very much doubted, and throwing her arms round Mrs. Wendover's neck she exclaimed, "I am very sure if I had twenty new aunts in Philadelphia, I should not love the whole of them together half as much as I do my dear old one." Upon this Mrs. Wendover sobbed aloud, and the good doctor drew his hand across his eyes.

The next day but one (Thursday) was that fixed on for the departure of Mr. Rochdale with his little charge, in case the weather would permit. On Wednesday afternoon Alina began to watch the clouds, hoping that it would rain on Thursday and enable her to remain another day at Brookfield. But in vain; the sky continued obstinately serene.

At evening she rejoiced in seeing a few light clouds in the west; but the sun set bright and clear beneath them, giving "token of a goodly day to-morrow." Finding that her pets could not conveniently be transported to Philadelphia, poor Alina went round to all and took a melancholy leave of them; and when it was over she went round again and took leave a second time. Before she retired for the night she slipped out into the porch to look at the sky, but found a brilliant star-light: still her aunt gave her some consolation by privately assuring her that the western part of the heavens seemed rather dark, and that not a star was twinkling between the Pankatanky hills. After Alina went to bed she literally cried herself to sleep. About midnight she was awakened by the sound of rain pattering against the window; and rejoicing much in the hope of at least one day's respite, and recollecting that sometimes the weather continued bad for three or four days, she soon forgot her sorrows in slumber. With the earliest light of dawn Mr. Rochdale (whose room was next to hers) heard Alina run to the window to look out, and exclaim, "Oh! I am so sorry! it is a clear bright morning!"

An early breakfast was provided for the travellers; but though it consisted of just such articles as she particularly liked, poor Alina was scarcely able to taste a mouthful. However, her aunt had amply stored her travelling basket with abundance of good things to eat on the road; and had also filled Mr. Rochdale's pockets with whatever of her nice eatables was pocketable. A last adieu was again bidden to all the pets, and they were again fervently recommended to the care of her aunt and uncle, and of the three domestics. Finally the stage came to the door, and the parting was heart-rending all round; so much so that Mr. Rochdale grieved at the necessity of the separation.

Alina knelt on the back seat of the vehicle, and gazed with overflowing eyes from the little window behind, till her uncle's house was no longer in sight, and till not a glimpse of the village remained in view. It was long before the new objects on the road and the novelty of travelling could withdraw the attention of the little girl from her own sorrows. But at length Mr. Rochdale found means to amuse and interest her, concerning the things that they saw in passing: her face gradually brightened, and she only dropped a tear now and then, when she remarked in the roadside fields a colt, or a calf, or a lamb that looked just like one of those she had left at her Brookfield home.

In the evening they arrived at their journey's end, and were set down at Mr. Rochdale's handsome house; and little Alina was received most kindly by Mrs. Rochdale, and most lovingly by all the children, comprising two boys of the ages of twelve and ten, and two girls aged six and three. Before her bonnet was taken off she had distributed among them the contents of her travelling basket, (having eaten but two of the cakes on her journey,) giving to every one an exactly equal share, and breaking into four equal parts an odd rusk that

was left at the last. "I think," said she, "you all seem as if you would be very good to me; and while you are eating I should like to go about the two parlours and look at all the pretty things, for I did not suppose there was such beautiful furniture in the whole world."

The two boys gallanted our young heroine round the rooms, and explained to her all the useful and ornamental articles such as she had not seen before, including the wonders of the centre-tables. An explanation of the pictures that decorated the walls they deferred till next day, when she could see them by daylight. She seemed very happy till bed-time, when on taking leave of the family for the night and kissing them all round, her lip trembled and tears filled her eyes at the thought that her good uncle and aunt Wendover were so far away.

A very pleasant chamber had been allotted to Alina, and she was delighted to find in it a handsome little book-case, the shelves of which were filled with amusing and instructive books; and there were also an extremely pretty work-table and work-box.

Next day measures were commenced for the equipment of Alina with such articles of dress as were then in fashion for city children of her age; her present costume being some years behind the mode. Yet she had so much beauty and so much natural grace that it did not seem to disfigure her; at least in the eyes of the two boys.

When Alina had unpacked her baggage, she brought down a small wooden box, shaped like a trunk with a round lid, and gaily painted with large red and yellow tulips on a blue ground. This, she said, contained her treasures; and she produced from it numerous little nick-nacks made for her by her aunt Elsey Wendover, who had been educated at Bethlehem. Of course when Mrs. Wendover was a girl a Bethlehem education was far more old-fashioned than it is now, and what was then considered ornamental needle-work was sedulously cultivated. Among these evidences of aunt Elsey's taste and skill (all of which were folded in silk paper) there was an enormous white satin pincushion embroidered with a bunch of non-descript flowers on one side, and a cottage and willow on the other, and a rosette of pink satin ribbon at each corner. There was a white satin watch-paper with a forget-me-not flower in the centre, to be ready for the time when Alina should be old enough to wear a watch. There was an embroidered pink satin pocket-book, to be ready for the time when Alina should have notes to put into it; and a blue satin thread-case, stitched into long compartments, with six skeins of sewing-silk of different colours run into these divisions; the back of the thread-case worked in a white jessamine pattern running up its whole length. And there was a curious knit purse with the name of Alina Derlay introduced among its stitches. There were also two ingenious specimens of mosaic made of the most minute pieces of printed calico arranged in very difficult arabesque forms; the whole being

lined and fringed with white, and having at each corner a loop of holland tape. These, Alina informed her cousins, were an iron-holder and a kettle-holder. She showed them also (with great pride in the accomplishments of her aunt) what she called a beautiful pocket, with strings of orange ribbon. It was made of fine linen, close-stitched with coloured silks, the principal part of the pattern being intended to represent a basket of flowers, a tall sprig ascending on each side of the aperture, which was overcast along its edge in scrolls of bright blue. Leonard Rochdale asked Alina if this pocket was to be worn outside; but his brother Edwin shook his head at him, and said "Shame!"

The Rochdales gathered from Alina that her aunt Elsey, when her household cares were over, devoted all her leisure to fancy needle-work, during which occupation she was always very happy to listen to a book, though she thought she never had time to do her own reading. "I was very glad," said Alina, "when I was old enough to read, for then I could amuse dear aunt Elsey of afternoons; and uncle generally read to her of evenings. And I was always allowed to sit up till nine o'clock to listen, if it was a book that I could understand. I read to aunt Elsey the whole of the Children's Friend, and the Misses Magazine, and Evenings at Home, and Mother Bunch's Fairy Tales—which last I liked best of all. Uncle read to her chiefly out of the Spectator, and the Rambler, and the Adventurer, and the Citizen of the World—for she liked books that she was used to. And sometimes he read a book in a great many volumes that always made me sleepy, notwithstanding that it was about a very good man named Sir Charles Grandison, whom aunt Elsey told me was the proper pattern for all gentlemen. There was a picture in each volume, and he wore a laced coat and waistcoat, with a sword by his side; and his hair was dressed high, and curled and powdered, and his skirts looked so very stiff. I never saw any one at Brookfield that seemed like Sir Charles Grandison; but now I have come to Philadelphia, I dare say I shall meet with a great many."

Leonard Rochdale bit his lips, and even Edwin could scarcely suppress a smile.

To be brief, Alina was in a short time equipped with handsome and becoming habiliments, and the boys pronounced her "perfect." She had at once won the hearts of all the Rochdale family; and her chief pet was little Cora, whom she declared to be better than chickens or kittens, and much superior to flowers. She was sent to an excellent school, and instructed in French, music, dancing, drawing, and the usual female accomplishments; making an extraordinary progress in each. Her vivacity and intelligence, united with kind feelings and an excellent temper, at once gained the hearts of the whole house of Rochdale, and it was impossible that she should be otherwise than happy with them: though neither time nor absence in the least diminished her affectionate regard for the good Wendovers.

Alina always kept on hand a very large sheet of paper, on which she every day noted down something that she thought her aunt Elsey would like to hear, (including the feats of little Cora,) and when the sheet became completely filled it was folded, sealed, and despatched by mail to Brookfield as a letter. From her aunt she received similar missives in return, giving a full account of the animals and flowers, and all other things that were likely to interest her; the doctor always adding a postscript. Next summer Alina was made very happy by being allowed to spend the month of August at Brookfield. She carried her aunt Elsey a large supply of working cottons, crewels, and silks; and also some new books, which Mrs. Wendover (on hearing her intention) had requested should be *old* ones. Therefore, by Mrs. Rochdale's recommendation, she took Evelina, Cecilia, and Camilla; books that are too excellent ever to be out of date.

Time passed on; and our young and lovely heroine advanced towards womanhood. Yet still, though Alina went every summer to gladden their hearts at Brookfield, the good and simple-minded Wendovers never accomplished their often-promised visit to Philadelphia. They had remained so long stationary that a journey of even one day had become a very formidable thing to them; and the doctor thought he knew enough of what was going on in the world by receiving regularly all the new medical publications. The wife would not leave the husband even for a few days, lest he should be taken ill in her absence; and *vice versa*. Again, the good doctor knew not how to spare the time for going on a pleasurable excursion, as he was always wanted at Brookfield. He could not leave Sammy Jones in the midst of his sore throat; and then by the time Sammy Jones was out of danger, Mary Wilson had scalded her foot; or Nancy Brown had sprained her wrist. He was anxious to see if the remedies he had directed for little Sally Thomson's fits would do her any good; and he could not leave Dennis O'Murphy till his rheumatism was better, lest the whiskey prescribed for rubbing his shoulder should be taken by Dennis internally.

Alina Derlay was about sixteen when, soon after her return from a visit to Brookfield, she caught a violent cold, which was accompanied by a raging fever, and proved almost too much even for her excellent constitution. Her illness was severe and dangerous; but just about the time of its commencement Dr. Wendover was seized with an apoplectic attack which rendered it impossible for him and his wife to come to Philadelphia to see her, as they would otherwise have done; leaving the health of Brookfield to take care of itself. By the time Dr. Wendover recovered, Alina was out of danger, and the first use she made of her convalescent strength was to write a letter to her uncle and aunt. She received in return one in the doctor's own hand, and it proved that this his first apoplectic fit, had in no respect impaired his mind.

After Alina's recovery she found that large portions of her hair came out whenever she combed it—one of the frequent consequences of a severe illness. She tried in vain all the most popular unguents recommended by the perfumers, but found them in her case of no avail—notwithstanding that they were specified to cover with beautiful tresses heads that were absolutely bald. Our heroine's hair still came out in handfuls, and she was persuaded to resort to the last desperate remedy of having it all shaved off. This was accordingly done, to the great regret of the younger Rochdales, who all witnessed the operation; Cora, who was now about nine years old, absolutely crying when she saw the locks of "dear Lina" falling on the carpet.

Alina had previously provided herself with some very pretty caps; and she looked so sweetly in them that Leonard Rochdale wished her hair might never grow again, so that she might wear them always. Her hair, however, did grow very fast; and in a short time there was enough on each temple to form two or three pretty little curls that were extremely becoming to her. Her seventeenth birthday was approaching, and Alina Derlay was now considered of a proper age to come out, (as it is called,) and to issue cards in her own name for a little ball. For the last twelve months she had always been included in the invitations sent to the Rochdale family: every member of which took great delight in the admiration constantly excited by her beauty, accomplishments, and amiability.

Preparations for the ball were made according to the then prevailing fashion in Philadelphia; the Rochdales (who lived in the enjoyment of wealth that was well secured) always conforming to *l'usage du monde* when they could do so without folly or impropriety. Alina was to wear, over white lawn, a dress of exquisite India muslin trimmed with the finest lace; and she had bespoken, from a pattern of her own selection at the establishment of a distinguished *modiste*, a beautiful little juvenile cap, surpassingly graceful and elegantly simple. The dress and the cap were both sent home the evening before the party, at a time when the young people were all in the front parlour, each engaged in doing something towards the decorations of the approaching fête: Mrs. Rochdale being occupied in her china closet, and Mr. Rochdale having retired to his library. Alina had taken the dress up stairs, tried it on, and found it to fit exactly; and had just resumed her former habiliments, when she was summoned down on the arrival of the cap from Madame Rubaniere. It was immediately transferred from the bandbox to Alina's head, and "universally admired" as the sweetest and most becoming little thing that ever was made or worn; and Leonard again repeated his wish that her hair would never grow any more.

Presently there was another ring at the door; and one of the servants brought in a very large bandbox, which he said had just been left by a countryman, who merely inquired if this was not

Mr. Rochdale's house, and then set down the box in the vestibule, said he was in a great hurry, and departed. The box was directed to Miss Alina Delray. It was secured by numerous bands of broad white tape crossing each other backwards and forwards, and sealed in divers places with red wax. On opening it there was found another cap, a complete contrast to the one Alina had just been trying on. It was of very fine muslin entirely covered with close heavy needle-work in a great variety of stitches and patterns, each pattern contrived exactly to suit the numerous strangely-shaped compartments of which the cap was composed. There was a head-piece carved all round its upper extremity with large deep points, each worked in a point-pattern, and each point having a scalloped edge. These points were met by others belonging to the lower edge of a circular crown, that stood up tall and high. The diamond-shaped openings formed by the meeting of the points that united the head-piece and the crown, were filled up by gathered puffings. The union of the points was marked by cockades of high-coloured stiff lilac ribbon. There were no less than three full borders or rather ruffles, all of different breadths; every frill being wrought with a most elaborate pattern, having an open-work edge of various lace-stitches. The three borders were all made to stand up and to stand out, and were kept in that posture by numerous loops of the aforesaid lilac ribbon, which also decorated the back of the neck in the form of a hard double-quilling. Directly in front was a large bow constructed with mathematical regularity; and then there were two twin bows somewhat smaller, one at each cheek: the ends of all the bows being accurately cut into sharp points that were surmounted by a row of orifices snipped into the diamond form.

The appearance of this extraordinary cap first elicited exclamations of surprise, which were succeeded by symptoms of risibility as its beauties were farther examined into. A letter was found at the bottom of the bandbox. "It is from dear aunt Wendover," said Alina; "she has undoubtedly sent this cap as a present to some old friend in Philadelphia, and has transmitted it first to me that I may attend to its being safely conveyed to the person for whom it is designed."

Alina glanced over the contents of the letter, and as she did so her countenance changed.

"Any bad news?" inquired Edwin Rochdale.

"None, except that the cap is for me."

"For you! for you!" was the general exclamation—and Leonard Rochdale laughed outright.

"Listen," said Alina, "and I will read you the letter."

"MY DEAR CHILD—As soon as I received the news of your head being shaved to make your hair grow out thick, and that you were wearing caps, (a sad thing for so young a girl,) I determined to set myself to working one on purpose for you. I told you nothing about it, that I might give you an

agreeable surprise. This cap, I am sure, will be doubly valuable to my dear Alina, because it is the last her old grandaunt will ever work. Not that I expect to die—but my eyes are at last giving out, (as far, at least, as fine needle-work is concerned,) and I expect to be consigned to knitting and patch-work for the rest of my life. However, I ought not to repine, for as I have been favoured with a great many years of the ornamental, I have concluded now to submit with a good grace to the useful. When I was working the last flower in this cap (it is at the right hand end of the third border) I felt that even with the aid of glasses I ought never to do fine work again; and my eyes ached all that night, so that I was unable to sleep; and indeed they have been very painful for the last six weeks. So, next morning, I gratified husband by telling him I had come to a resolution of giving up fine needle-work for ever, and knitting all his stockings myself. And yet I almost cried at the idea of relinquishing so great and pleasing an accomplishment. It is hard to resign what has afforded satisfaction to ourselves and others for a great many years: particularly what we excel in.

"My dear Alina, I am not vain; but I think you will acknowledge this a wonderful cap, to be worked and made up by a woman in her seventy-third year. If you inspect all the leaves and flowers carefully, one by one, you will find them as neat and regular as if done by eyes as young as your own; and you will see that not a thread of the open-work is amiss. Hearing that you are to have a ball on your birth-night, I have laboured very hard to get this cap finished in time for you to wear it on that great occasion; but it has been a labour of love. Husband considers it my masterpiece; and I am glad that my last act of muslin-work is one that will be so gratifying to my beloved girl. How I wish that I could be present when the bandbox is opened, and the cap displayed! When your ball comes, I shall imagine that I see you in this very cap, 'the admired of all beholders,' as husband says out of some book. Just ask the company to examine the open-work, particularly the leaves that are done in crown-stitch and basket-stitch; and those also in wheel-stitch.

"Everything about this cap is regular and substantial. There are (if you count them) twelve cockades all exactly alike, three before and three behind, and three at each side. Every cockade marks the place where two points meet, one point belonging to the crown and one to the head-piece; so that there are twenty-four points in all, and every point is edged with nine scallops. Each cockade has a firm foundation (about the size of a ten cent piece) made of buckram covered with silk. Of this you had better inform the company, otherwise they will not know. Indeed all the trimming is as strong as possible; and so is the whole cap. I know you will like it, because it will remind you of Brookfield, and your loving aunt, and your kind uncle who read to me of evenings during the three months I have been at work on it. Now that I can

no longer employ myself with ornamental sewing, I may probably take to books myself. Reading is not so bad for the eyes as open-work.

"Dear Alina, write me a most particular account of the ball—I am not vain; but I should like very much to hear the effect produced by my cap. The lilac ribbon I think remarkably genteel: it is such a full deep colour, a little upon the reddish. It was the stoutest Mr. Figgins had in his store, and I took all there was of it.

"Do not be afraid of flattering me too much by repeating to me any handsome things that people may say about the cap. I can bear to have my work praised. You will not forget to point out its chief excellences to the company; in an unostentatious manner, of course. You are so entirely free from pride and vanity that I can trust you to wear such a thing, without being puffed up by it.

"Beloved Alina, I wish you a great deal of pleasure at the ball, and hope that nothing that evening will cause you the slightest annoyance. I know you will look surprisingly in the cap, and quite out of the common way. The young gentlemen will have to take care of their hearts. As you are now educated, and have no particular holidays, we shall expect, you know, to see you at Brookfield long before August. The sooner the better, is the sincere wish of your affectionate granduncle and
Your ever-loving grandaunt,

"ALISON WENDOVER."

"N. B. Another advantage in the cap is its durability. If carefully washed and ironed, it will last ten years and more. How different from the flimsy things that will not bear a single doing up. So that even after your hair has grown, you will be able to wear it any time when you may have occasion for a strong cap. You see how perfectly clean I have kept it, by covering the work, as I went along, with white paper basted closely on. When you put it away, stuff out the bows with rolls of wadding to keep them in shape. No doubt you will have many applications for the pattern, which it would be unkind to refuse.

"To tell you a secret, I sat up all last night to

finish this cap, that it might certainly reach you in time for your ball. But it is such a pleasure to work for my dear Alina's benefit."

Our heroine could not always suppress a smile while reading this characteristic epistle of the kind and simple-minded old lady. But when she found that her young hearers were all laughing, except Edwin whose eyes were filled with tears, she endeavoured to look serious.

"Poor aunt Wendover," said Edwin. "How mortified she will be, dear Alina, when she finds that you could not wear her cap."

Alina put on the cap, and looked in the pier-glass. All her cousins laughed out, except Edwin; and even he could not help smiling.

"I acknowledge that it is not becoming to me," said she; taking it off and resuming her own cap, that she had worn all day.

"Becoming to you, dear Alina," exclaimed Leonard Rochdale. "It is frightful—it is disfiguring. In fact, the ugliest thing I ever beheld in my life."

"How unfortunate," observed Edwin—"that the kind old lady should have laboured at it three months, and injured her eyes so that (as she says) she can never do any such work again."

"So much the better," said Leonard.

"Pho, Leonard," said Imogene Rochdale, a sprightly girl of fifteen, who saw that Alina looked sorrowfully at his remark—"what do *you* know about needle-work? No doubt this is excellent in its way. But then, see how the world has improved in cap-making. Look at this love of a thing that has come from Madam Rubaniere's. See these exquisite lilies of the valley, tastefully interspersed amid a border so transparent that at a distance you can scarcely see it. And then the soft rich ribbon of the purest white, terminating at the back of the head in one graceful bow, with a cluster of snow-drops slipped through the knot in the centre—such a bow, in short, as none but a Frenchwoman could arrange. And now (taking one in each hand) behold the contrast of the two caps."

(To be continued.)

Original.

A BACHELOR'S LIMNINGS.

BY MRS. EMMA C. EMBURY.

"We will draw the curtain and show you the pictures."—*Shakespeare.*

It was the evening of a merry Christmas day, which had been celebrated, according to a time-honored custom, by a large family party at the old Morton homestead. Jasper Morton, the last representative of a former generation, had long since past the Psalmist's span of life, yet his eye was still bright, his step still firm, and his neat, compact, though somewhat undersized person, as upright and almost as active as when, some forty years earlier, he had shone the beau of many a brilliant circle. He had outlived all those with whom he set out in life; parents, brothers, sisters,—all had gone before him, and he remained a lonely resident in the large old family mansion, like a guest who had lingered in the banqueting-hall, when the feast was over and the music hushed. Yet Jasper Morton was far from being a solitary and unhappy old man. Though he had never known the companionship of conjugal affection, and though no stately sons and fair daughters had sprung up around him, to renew his youth, (for, after all researches, the true fountain of rejuvenescence may be found in parental affection,) yet his courteous manners, his perfectly amiable temper, his many virtues, and especially his happy faculty of attracting the love of childhood, secured to him the enjoyment of many warm and steadfast friendships. In his youth he had been eminently handsome, and his numerous nephews and nieces, by whom he was tenderly beloved, often expressed their surprise that one, whose prompt affections seemed ever standing on the very threshold of his heart, ready to welcome all comers, should have remained a bachelor.

On the evening in question the young people had gathered round Uncle Jasper's easy chair and accused him of an unequal distribution of his hospitable attentions. They laughingly insisted that he had been particularly civil to his elder relatives, and most provokingly interested in the sports of the little children, while they,—the very élite of the party,—the young men and women—were left to amuse themselves. In vain the old gentleman defended himself by pleading that if he had taken less pains to amuse them it was because he knew age was always a wearisome companion at their time of life, and that he was now only a fit associate for those who were following in his own footsteps downhill, or for the very young, who had not raised their thoughts to the toilsome ascent they were soon to climb. They loved Uncle Jasper too well to listen to such excuses, and declared that nothing should be allowed to screen him from the imputation of incivility but a promise to devote one whole hour to their sole edification. After a merry war of words with the gay troupe, the kind-hearted old man agreed to make his peace by admitting them to the sanctuary of his study, and relating a reminiscence of olden times. Accordingly the graver por-

tion of the company were accommodated with whist tables and newspapers, easy chairs, and knitting needles,—the children were sent into the dining room to try their new toys,—lights were ordered into the library, and with many a ringing laugh and pleasant jest, the young folks led Uncle Jasper between them to the apartment. Drawing his large and quaintly-fashioned arm-chair close to the fire, the gay group clustered around him in all the varied attitudes of youthful and unstudied grace, while certain manœuvres which were designed to place certain young persons in close vicinity to each other, excited the old man's good humored raillery at the same time that the circumstance gave its tone to the reminiscences which he proposed to relate.

"You have often wondered at my celibacy, children," said Uncle Jasper, "how would you like to listen to some of my love adventures?"

An exclamation of approbation and pleasure echoed through the apartment in reply.

"I think I may as well tell you my experience in the tender passion," said the old man with a smile, "it may teach a good lesson to my young listeners of both sexes. You, my fair nieces, may learn from it, how materially trifles influence a lover's feelings and how easily the chains you weave may be broken if every link be not carefully and closely rivetted; while you, my nephews, may perhaps learn to be less exacting in your desires, and more tolerant to the weaknesses of female character." With those words he unlocked a secret drawer in his desk, and drew forth a small port-folio.

"Here," said he, "is contained the lover's journal. Nay be not so impatient," he continued, as several hands were extended towards the little case, "the record is written in a tongue which requires the aid of an interpreter; what could you learn from this page?" and the old man held up to view a beautifully colored miniature portrait of a young, fair, delicate looking girl.

"Let us see,—let us see," exclaimed several voices.

The picture was accordingly handed round the circle; every one examined it, every one criticized it, but still they saw nothing beyond the likeness of a pretty woman.

"You can read nothing there," said Uncle Jasper, as the picture again reached his hands, "and yet to me it is fraught with many a tender recollection, for it is connected with the first love of a youthful heart.

"I entered society with most deferential and chivalrous regard for the gentler sex. My sister, my youngest and best-beloved sister, was a very paragon of delicacy, refinement and gentleness, so that my respect for female domestic life which are apt to make a man very sceptical as to the actual existence of true modesty. You let me be surprised, girls, but I can assure you that the common intercourse between brothers and sisters, innocent as it is, often tends to destroy a man's real respect for the whole sex. Let me give you a piece of advice: never admit brothers to your dressing-rooms,—never app-

before them in slovenly attire,—never indulge in the slipshod carelessness of looks and words which domestic familiarity often permits;—in a word,—pay to fathers and brothers,—ay, and husbands too, when you get them,—the respect you consider due to *lovers*, and never come before them in either mental or personal dishabille, if you would keep alive in the world the old chivalrous spirit of '*loyauté aux dames*.'

My sister Bridget was one of the loveliest of women, and I readily adopted the belief that all who possessed similar beauty of form must be gifted with the same perfection of character. I was in my eighteenth year when our cousin, Grace Nugent, came to pass a summer at Morton's Grange. The portrait you have just seen is an accurate likeness of the fair, fragile looking girl, who seemed to my excited fancy the very personification of delicacy. Her form was slight and extremely graceful; her complexion of that pure transparent hue which though perfectly colorless in repose, wears such changeful and beautiful rosetints when the feelings are excited; her eyes were blue as the summer heaven, and her locks of 'paly gold' fell in unrestrained luxuriance upon her neck, giving her an appearance of almost childlike loveliness. Almost all men bestow their first love upon a cousin. The familiarity permitted by the relationship, breaks down the barrier which seemed to separate them from the beings long worshipped at an humble distance, and while they begin by considering a cousin as a sort of second sister, they are very apt to end by cherishing a much warmer feeling.

Cousin Grace was just the kind of person calculated to awaken my susceptibilities. There was a dash of romance and sentiment in her character, perfectly bewitching to an imaginative boy. She loved to wander in the woods, to clamber among the hills, to lie beside the rippling brook and wreath her bright hair with wild flowers, while her melodious voice poured forth the poet's sweetest strains in the midst of scenes best adapted to give them their full and finest effect. Her tastes were a little fantastic, perhaps, (I did not think so then, however,) but they were all refined, and her pretty affectation of rural costume and simple garb was to me quite charming. She doated on poetry and music, was passionately fond of flowers, read novels by the midnight taper, wept over the distresses of imaginary heroines in white muslin, and in short, was as perfect a specimen of sentimental young lady-ism as could be found on a summer's day.

Grace had a warm heart, the most imperturbable good temper, and a fund of good sense at the bottom of her girlish follies. But she could not resist the temptations which my green youth offered to the innate coquetry of woman's nature. She was pleased and flattered by my unstudied deference to her every caprice, while my deep reverence for the purity which I then believed to be enshrined in every female heart, exactly suited her romantic ideas. She certainly encouraged my attentions until I was not only irretrievably in love, but really believed that I was blessed with reciprocal affection. It is true that Grace was five years my senior, yet this seemed to me but a trifling disparity. Indeed I am not

sure that it did not tend to increase my passion, by feeding my vanity with the fancy that I had been able to make an impression on one who had been the belle of society.

You know I have always been something of an artist, and it was during the excitement of this first dream of the heart that I painted her miniature. Old as I am I can remember the thrill of delight with which I looked upon the face whose loveliness I was slowly transferring to the senseless ivory. When the portrait was finished I laid it in my port-folio as a secret and sacred treasure. For worlds I would not have enshrined it in glittering gold and worn it within my bosom, as a less delicate lover might have done. The very thought seemed like sacrilege against the fair pure being, whose fairy hand I had never ventured to press to my lips. Indeed the most decided characteristic of my first passion was its reverence. I almost venerated the woman whom I loved, and a kiss imprinted on her hand would have seemed to me a desecration of her perfect purity. There are but few events, however, in the history of my past affection, and my tale is almost at an end. I had been one day sent to a neighboring town on business which detained me until nightfall, and having been so fortunate as to secure a new novel and a rare bouquet for Cousin Grace, I was all impatience to receive her thanks. When I entered the parlor on my return, I found my sister alone, and in answer to my inquiries she informed me that Grace had gone to walk in the shrubbery. I flung down the books, seized the bouquet and bounded down the steps of the terrace, quite regardless of Bridget who called after me as if desirous of detaining me. Hurrying on through the darkened walks, I approached an opening where I had arranged a rustic seat, almost embowered in roses, beside a marble basin filled with gold fish. It was always a favorite resort of my cousin, and I was almost certain I should find her there. The beams of a young moon, mingling with the grey twilight, fell directly within this little bower, which was now the only spot of brightness amid a labyrinth of deeply shaded paths. My footsteps seemed to have been unheard, for just as I approached the entrance to the secluded retreat, a sound struck upon my ear which almost chilled my blood. It was a *kiss*,—a rude vulgar *loud kiss*,—resembling more the cracking of a wagoner's whip than any other sound I could remember;—another and another succeeded, and as I drew one step nearer I beheld my delicate romantic, *venerated* cousin encircled by the arm of a coarse, black-bearded, gigantic fellow who stood at least six feet two in his boots, and whose bristle-like whiskers and moustache were in immediate contact with the rosy lips and tender cheek of my lady-love. My first impulse was to rush in and knock the rascal down, but Cousin Grace looked up into his face with such a tender smile, and murmured such loving words as she leaned her head on his great broad chest, that I concluded not to interrupt her *refined* enjoyment of his society. Turning upon my heel I retreated to my own apartment in double quick time,—but I was in a towering passion, and as soon as I could command my feelings I flew to my sister with the disgraceful tale.

Bridget smiled and asked me if I did not know that Grace was engaged to be married.

"How long since?" I breathlessly asked.

"The affair has been arranged these two years, and Mr. Bradley has now come to accompany her home."

My beautiful fabric of love's hopes was suddenly toppled down and fell in ruins at my feet. I saw that I had been the dupe of my own folly and woman's vanity; and yet I think I could have forgiven all if it had not been for that hateful kiss. Faugh! it disgusts me almost as much in remembrance as it did in its vile reality. And to think too that Cousin Grace, with all her refinement, was the plighted wife of a man whose manners, even in so delicate a matter, were so coarse and vulgar! It was a sad shock to my sensibilities, but it cured me of my passion as effectually as the crack of a rifle could have relieved me from the ills of life. I saw Cousin Grace depart with something like satisfaction and as she embraced my mother and sister I felt half vexed with Bridget for allowing those polluted lips to touch her pure cheek. I assisted Grace into the carriage, shook hands with her, and never saw her again. Some months afterwards a piece of bride's cake together with a very affectionate note from *Mrs. Bradley* came to my sister; and in less than five years later, a letter, sealed with black, emblazoned with all the outward signs of mourning, and written in *Mr. Bradley's* hand, bore the tidings that Cousin Grace was dead!

We learned somewhat of her fate from other sources. She had died broken-hearted. Poor thing,—her husband, who did not know how to treat his mistress with respect, learned a lesson of ferocious power to practise towards his defenceless wife. He became intemperate and brutal in his manners, until disappointment, ill-treatment and suffering wrought out the work of disease and relieved her from the burden of existence. 'I am *resigned* to live if it be the will of God, but, oh, pray for me that he may in mercy take me now to himself!' Such were almost her last words, uttered in the ear of a dear and sympathizing friend; and God did hear the prayer of a crushed and bleeding heart."

Uncle Jasper's eyes were suffused with tears as he recalled the dying words of the woman who had won his earliest affection, and the deep silence of his audience bore witness to the generous sympathy of young and gentle natures. The old man at length resumed:

"Six years elapsed ere I had sufficient confidence in woman to fall a second time into love's snares. Many a passing fancy occupied my thoughts, many a transient liking diversified my student life, but I was proof against any serious impression on the subject. At length my hour of trial came, and surely Saint Anthony's temptation was scarcely fairer than mine."

As Uncle Jasper spoke, he drew forth a second miniature, and never did a brighter or merrier face look out from a painter's gallery of beauties. It seemed ready to dimple into smiles as one gazed upon it, and the glittering black eyes seemed absolutely dancing in light, while the small rosy mouth was wreathed with smiles of perfect joyousness.

"How beautiful! what a Hebe-like countenance!" exclaimed a youth who eagerly contemplated the picture, "surely no deformity of character could be hidden beneath such brilliant loveliness."

Uncle Jasper continued: "This lady whom I shall call Celestina, I met at Saratoga, and I was instantly struck with her joyous countenance. There was a graceful childishness in her manners, a guileless frankness in her language, and a total abandonment of her feelings to every pleasant impulse of her happy nature, which charmed me. Upon closer acquaintance I found new reason for being pleased with her, for she was the very life and soul of her quiet home. Full of mirth, and perfectly gentle in temper, she seemed born to diffuse happiness around her, while her thoughtlessness, and occasional indiscretion only evinced the perfect artlessness of her character. Yet she was not one for whom a man could feel an intense and fervent passion. There is something in gayety unfavorable to the growth of deep-rooted emotions, and while my fancy was attracted and my feelings pleasantly excited by Celestina's frank cheerfulness and beauty, I could scarcely bring myself to the belief that I was seriously in love. Yet I was sufficiently fascinated to become a very devoted admirer. Her parents seemed highly pleased with my visits, the lady herself was no ways loth to receive my attentions, and readily accepted the presents which I lavished upon her with no niggard hand. My sense of honor finally decided my predilection, and I had determined to make proposals to Celestina at the first convenient opportunity, when I was saved all future thought on the subject by a singular freak of woman's caprice.

I was seated one evening in the drawing-room with Celestina, her parents and a few accidental visitors, when a servant summoned the young lady from the room. She retired, and after a moment's delay in the hall was heard to ascend the stairs. Minute after minute elapsed and still she did not return, until at length her mother also left the room to ascertain the cause of Celestina's absence. In a few moments she returned smiling and apologized for her daughter's sudden desertion of us, by saying that Madame Martineau had sent to receive directions respecting the trimming of a ball-dress, and that Celestina fearing lest some mistake should occur had thoughtlessly accompanied the messenger to the dress-maker's house, which was but a few squares distant. I immediately rose and proposed to go in search of the imprudent girl who had thus ventured out at eight o'clock in the evening with no other attendant than a servant. I was familiar with the outside of madame's domicile, as I had often accompanied Celestina to the spot. Indeed our walks, whether at morning or afternoon, usually terminated at this *magasin des modes*, and the frequency of her visits led me sometimes to fear lest Celestina was becoming a devotee of dress and fashion. On the present occasion I was compelled to wait nearly half an hour at the door, and then was greeted with the intelligence that Celestina had not been there since the previous day. I hurried back but she had not yet returned. All was now confusion and dismay. Her room was searched

and it was then discovered that the most valuable part of her wardrobe had vanished also, while in one of the drawers of the dressing-table,—(so placed, however, as not to be found unless strict search was made,) was a letter written on that very evening which explained the mystery. It seems that the *frank* and *artless* Celestina had been for more than a year engaged in a clandestine correspondence with a young officer in the navy, whose character rendered him extremely obnoxious to her parents. She had been taken from home to avoid him when I met her at Saratoga, and the *guileless* creature had been making use of me and my attentions in order to blind her family to her secret. Her interviews with her lover had taken place at the house of her dress-maker, while I was allowed to conduct her to the door; her wardrobe had been sent away under pretext of receiving necessary alterations from the hand of fashion, and, finally, Miss Celestina, in her refined simplicity, had left me in the drawing-room and deliberately walked out to meet her lover who had every thing in readiness for their marriage. When next I met her, she was leaning on the arm of a rakish-looking boyish fellow, in naval uniform, and I made my last bow to Mrs. Midshipman Ringbolt. I need not say that I kept my own counsel and never disclosed my 'intentions' either to the bright-faced bride or to her really afflicted parents. She lived to become the fat, frivolous and fretful mother of some nine or ten children, who were reared on the scanty pay of a lieutenant, while her husband, who was a party to her deception, being disappointed in his hopes of fortune from his marriage, could never be induced to treat her with the slightest confidence, but made her deeply sensible of the fact that treachery is ever rewarded by the suspicion and contempt of those who have been most benefited by its exercise.

When a woman commits an act of such inexcusable deception, she not only sins against her own nature but she is guilty of injustice towards her whole sex, for she awakens distrust in the bosoms of those who would fain be trustful and unsuspecting. It was long ere I recovered from the effects of Celestina's falsehood, yet some three years afterwards I was painting this third picture."

"What a Juno-like face and figure!" was the exclamation of several as they looked upon the portrait.

"You are right; she was a Juno in more respects than one. Margaretta was tall and stately and elegant in her person, while her manners were characterized by a grave dignity which well suited the Spanish style of her beauty. Her hair was always braided smoothly upon her brow, her dress, fitted with wonderful exactness to her fine form, was usually of some dark color, and there was a staid sobriety in her demeanour which marked her a true descendant of a Puritan stock. Possessed of a very strong mind, she had given her attention to studies rather unusual to her sex, and, though she carefully concealed the fact in general society, she was known by her intimate friends to be deeply versed in the exact sciences. There was a quiet and repose to be found in her company which exactly suited one who was now heartily wearied of the frivolities of gay life, and I soon found myself spending most of my evenings

beside the little work-table of the intellectual Margaretta. She certainly had—that most rare quality—good sense, and though a little tinctured with the fanciful theories of speculative philosophy, she was one of the most brilliant conversationists I ever remember to have heard. What made me still more alive to her talents was the fact that though a lover of books she still did not despise the duties peculiarly adapted to her sex. The house was the very perfection of neatness,—not a speck of dust ever defaced the polished furniture; the carpets looked as if a thread never fell upon them, the brass fire-irons and door handles shone with silvery lustre, and the very hearthstones were polished like mirrors. All this was the work of Margaretta, and I even fancied I could detect a degree of fastidiousness and over neatness in her anxious look if a visitor incautiously approached his chair too near the painted wall, or his foot to the verge of the shining hearth. 'What a prize, thought I, 'would such a wife be to a studious man! She could enter into all his pursuits, share his studies, enjoy his intellectual pleasures and yet provide him with all those comforts which only a woman conversant with domestic duties can secure to a household. Her precision perhaps approaches to the brink of stiffness and restraint, but how easily this might be graduated by the influence of affection!'

Such was my reasoning, and you will perceive that by this time prudential considerations began to mingle with my love-dreams. I no longer wanted a woman to be so very angelic, and I did not like her the less for being able to descend to the drudgery of life. After an evening spent in delightful converse with Margaretta, during the course of which she proved, to the satisfaction of myself and several other gentlemen, that the most effectual subjugation of human passions was the study of the exact sciences, and brought most indisputable evidence that a mathematician was never known to be guilty of an act of ungoverned rage, I determined to make proposals to her in due form. Some demon (or some guardian angel I might better say,) suggested to me that by calling on her in the morning I should be more likely to secure an uninterrupted interview. Accordingly, the morning after her graceful defence of her studies, I found myself at her door at a very early hour, and my heart beat with almost boyish excitement as I rang the bell which was to admit me to her presence. The door was opened for me by a little servant girl,—one of those wretched children, usually bound by indentures to their employers, and either picked up from the wayside by the overseers of the poor, or taken from the miserable deathbed of their pauper parents by the hand of associated charity. Of all deplorable conditions of humanity to be found in our happy country, there are few more so than that of the poor *bound* girl if she happens to fall into the hands of a hard task-mistress. Childhood—the season of happiness—is to her the period of severest hardship, and the gayety of spirit which is as natural to the spring-time of life as is the song of the birds to the youth of the visible world, is in her a crime visited with severe chastisement. I know there are exceptions to this, but they are alas! too few, and most persons act

towards such unfortunate children as if poverty and privation ought to have wrought the work of long years, and given them a degree of discretion often wanting in the mistress who rules them with a rod of iron. The child had been crying bitterly, and as I asked for Margaretta she sobbed so much that she could only reply by ushering me into the parlor. The door of the apartment being open, my position enabled me to command a full view of the stair case without being seen by any one who might be descending, and ere the little girl reached the top step Margaretta was in the act of coming down. The child had gone up, in childish fashion, with her hand gliding along the polished balustrade, but her fingers were wet with tears, and I suppose the moisture had left its dimming trace, for as Margaretta met her, without waiting to hear her message or even to ask a question, she raised her hand (I *used* to admire her flexible fingers,) and gave the girl a blow in the face which sent her reeling against the opposite wall. Then following her down she repeated her blows as often as that little sorrowful face came within her reach, accompanying every stroke with bitter revilings of her slovenly habits, and denunciations of future vengeance if ever she dared to touch the balustrade again. The child vainly endeavored to speak, sobs and tears choked her utterance, while Margaretta's passion would not allow her to listen to the message she sought to convey. It was not until the object of her fury had retreated to the kitchen that Margaretta turned towards the parlor. I had tact enough to seem very intent on a volume which lay on the table, but Margaretta, who had just given so beautiful an exemplification of the power of mathematics to mollify the passions, stood before me utterly confounded and amazed. I made some frivolous excuse for my unseasonable visit, and after an awkward attempt at careless and agreeable conversation I took my leave. I never entered the house again. I had received sufficient proof that even the combinations of talent and good house-wifery was not quite all that was requisite in a wife, and the remembrance of that poor child's swollen and tearful face made me feel as if good temper was, after all, the chief ingredient necessary to the proper sweetening of the cup of wedded love. Margaretta died only a few years since,—unmarried, and as I suspect, unloved and unregretted."

After the merriment caused by this incident had subsided, Uncle Jasper produced another sketch. It was simply a head, relieved by light golden clouds which seemed floating around it, and it certainly was as beautiful and sylph-like, as if copied from some 'fair creature of the elements.'

"You well observe," said the old man, "that after I attained my thirtieth year I became peculiarly susceptible to the fascinations of *very youthful* beauty. At eighteen I fell in love with a woman five years my senior, and at two and thirty I was wooing a girl of eighteen. Mariana was a pretty little creature, plainly educated, and quite ignorant of fashion. Her voice was full of melody and the simple ballads which she was ever carolling, seemed like echoes of nature's own

music. She had been well trained in domestic management, and I soon learned from an obliging old aunt that all the cake, pies and puddings consumed in the house were the manufacture of Mariana. She was for ever sewing and singing,—her needle was always in her hands, and even while entertaining evening visitors she continued to accomplish the hemming of sundry strips of muslin, such as ladies generally keep for '*company work*.' There was something in her cheerfulness and industry which exactly suited my old-fashioned notions, while I was by no means insensible to the gratification which my palate derived from her delicate handiwork. A dinner, to which I was invited in company with several other friends, and which nearly realized my beau-ideal of a social entertainment,—prepared entirely under her supervision, though she appeared at table looking as cool and fresh as if she had never seen the interior of a kitchen, completed her conquest over me. As I grew older I had become fully sensible to the value of certain unintellectual enjoyments which in my boyhood I had despised, and, though never a *gourmand*, I certainly had a predilection for some of the pleasures of the table. Mariana's attainments in culinary lore were not quite as unusual as they might seem at present; for, at that time, most women completed their education by a close attendance on the *cuisine*; and I am inclined to think that if the same course of studies was still included in the list of a young lady's accomplishments, there would be less encouragement afforded to '*eating-houses*,' at least by married men. Mariana made the most delicious cake, the most delicate custards, the most *unsubstantial* puff paste that I have ever tasted, and when I looked on her pretty face and listened to her musical voice, I thought a man might do a much more foolish thing than to secure to himself such a pleasant and useful companion. There was only one thing I did not quite like in my new lady-love, and that was a want of some portion of that precision which had been carried to excess by Margaretta. Her capes and collars were rarely pinned with exactness, her dresses never fitted neatly, her shoes were apt to set loosely upon her pretty foot, and I once or twice detected her with that enormity in a lady's attire—a soiled stocking. I had my fears lest with much of the useful knowledge of domestic life, Mariana had acquired some of the slovenly habits which are apt to be the result of 'too much business.' This I found to be true and after many instances of want of system and personal neatness, my course was decided by a trifling incident. Early one fine spring morning, I was returning from a walk, and happening to pass the house inhabited by Mariana, I saw through the widely opened windows a pair of hands driving a broom handle with considerable vehemence. Just at that moment a head enveloped in a dingy, dusty old black handkerchief was thrust out of the window, and beneath that abominable *coiffure* I beheld the pretty face of the sylph-like Mariana. She immediately recognized me and snatched off the offending head-dress, but this only made matters worse, for I then saw the uncombed and disarranged locks and braids which but the evening before had shone

in glossy beauty, while a dress soiled and torn, hands of any color except snowy whiteness, and nails rimmed with ebony instead of pearl, completed the picture.

The truth was that Mariana had been taught to believe good house-keeping consisted in keeping a clean house and a well-furnished table, but the system which enables one to accomplish all this without sacrificing the delicacy of a true lady was wanting. She was a first rate cook and a most managing house-wife, but a miserable slattern withal; and for my part I think a good dinner and even a clean house is rather dearly purchased if it can only be obtained by merging the wife in the household drudge. Mariana afterwards married a rich, gouty old man who loved his palate beyond all earthly things, and who therefore made her his wife in order to enjoy the fruits of her skill in the culinary department. After allowing her to occupy the station of head cook in his establishment for five or six years, he very considerably died one day, after surfeiting upon a well-dressed dish of turtle, and left her the heiress of all his wealth, to the exclusion of his children by a former marriage. I have since often seen her in the market, looking like the personification of sluttishness, poking her fingers into a bit of beef, twisting the wing of a chicken to test its age, or tasting fresh butter on the edge of a dirty piece of money, while in the afternoon of the same day I have met her flaunting in all the splendors of lace and satin, and displaying a splendid equipage to the envy of her contemporaries.

There is only one more," said Uncle Jasper, sadly, as he drew forth the last limning, "but of this I cannot speak in tones of levity. You see there is little beauty in the face, but the light of Heaven rested on the soul of the creature whose features are here portrayed. Gifted with lofty intellect, a heart filled with pure and warm affections, and a hand ever ready for its feminine tasks, or for the ministrations of charity, Helen Maynor was one of the noblest of women. Distrust could not live in her presence, her clear brow was the index of truth, and every word she uttered, was as the voice of an oracle of virtue and wisdom. With no pretension of any kind—a gentle, quiet, lovely, and loving woman, she won her way to all hearts by the simple force of native goodness. I loved her as I had never loved before—ay, and as I never loved again. We were plighted to each other, the wedding day was fixed, the house intended for our home was purchased and furnished, and only the church's rite was wanting to complete my felicity, when I was struck with the fatal pestilence which so often ravaged our Atlantic cities in the summer months. The yellow fever selected me as one of its first victims, and Helen flew to my bedside as soon as she heard of my illness. I recovered; but it was only to find life an utter blank. I rose from my couch of weakness and pain, to follow Helen to her grave. She had caught the infection from me; she had inhaled poison from the lips which never opened but to bless her, and 'the desire of my eyes was taken from me at a stroke.'

Tell me not," continued the old man, after a long and agitated pause, "tell me not of *first love*—the

untimely fruit of restless youth and ready opportunity. That may pass like the breath-stain from the face of the mirror—like the dew from the summer blossom—like the snow-flake from before the sunbeam. But the *last love*—the love which grows up amid the thorns and branches of later life, like a wild flower in the desert, showing, by its sweet presence, that there is still a wellspring of happiness beneath the rugged soil; such is the love which lasts while life endures. It is the *last love* which has made me a lonely bachelor, for it is hallowed by the memory of the dead. My days of hope were wasted in the vain pursuit of unattainable perfection—my happiness lies buried in Helen's untimely grave—and memory alone is left to be the solace of the old man's solitude. '*Hec! quanto minus est cum reliquis versari quam tui meminisse!*' "

Brooklyn, L. I.

SKETCH OF A CASE, OR A PHYSICIAN EXTRAORDINARY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A NEW HOME," ETC.

DOCTOR R— sat alone in his study when a lady was announced.

"Mrs. Waldorf, sir," and the doctor laid down his pen and received his visiter very cordially. She was the wife of a rich German merchant, and a distant cousin of his own; a handsome woman of about five and thirty, with sufficient repose of manner, but too spirited an eye to pass for a mere fashionable machine.

"I have come to you, doctor, instead of sending for you," began the lady, "because I do not wish Mr. Waldorf to know I have thought it necessary to consult you. He is so easily alarmed, that if he knew you had prescribed for me he would watch me so closely and insist so much upon my observance of your directions to the very letter, that I should have no peace."

The doctor smiled, as if he thought Mr. Waldorf would not be so far wrong as his lady might suppose.

"But what is it, my dear madam?" he said, taking Mrs. Waldorf's hand and giving a look of professional scrutiny to her face. "You look well, though there is a slight flaccidity about the eyes, and not quite so ruddy a nether lip as one might wish to see. What is it?"

"Oh! a thousand things, doctor; my health is miserable—at least I sometimes think so; I have pains in the right side—and such flutterings at my heart—and such lassitude—and such headaches—and sleep so miserably—"

"Are your pains very severe? are they of a heavy, dull kind, or sharp and darting? and how often do you experience them?"

"They are not very constant—no, not constant, certainly, nor very severe—but, doctor, they fill me with apprehensions of future evil. It is not present suffering of which I complain, so much as a fear of worse to come. I dread lest disease should make such progress, unnoticed, that it will be vain to attempt a cure." And Mrs. Waldorf's eyes filled with tears at the very thought of her troubles.

"You are wise to take it in time," said Doctor R—. "But tell me more of these symptoms. At what time of the day do you generally feel most indisposed?"

"Oh! I can scarcely say. When I wake in the morning, I am always very miserable. My head is full of dull pain, especially about the eyes. My lips are parched; I find it a great exertion to dress

myself, and never have the slightest appetite for breakfast."

"Ah! indeed!" mused the doctor, "you breakfast as soon as you arise, I presume. At what hour do you retire?"

"We make it a rule to be in bed by twelve, unless we happen to be engaged out, which is but seldom. Waldorf detests parties and late hours. We spend our evenings with music or books, very quietly."

"At what hour do you sup?"

"We have nothing like a regular supper, but for mere sociality's sake we have a tray brought up about ten. I take nothing beyond a bit of chicken or a few oysters, or a slice of cake, and sometimes only a cracker and a glass of wine. You look as if you thought even this were better omitted; but I should scarcely know how to cut off one of my husband's few social pleasures. He would touch nothing if I did not partake with him. He thinks as ill of suppers as you do."

"I beg your pardon—I interrupted your detail of symptoms to ask these questions as to the evening. You say you have no appetite for breakfast—how long do these feelings of languor and exhaustion continue to trouble you?"

"Oh! I generally feel better after a cup of coffee; and after practicing at the harp or the piano-forte for an hour or two, or sometimes three when I have new music, I generally drive out, and perhaps shop a little, or at any rate take a turn into the country for the air, and usually return somewhat refreshed."

"Do you take your airings alone?"

"Yes—perforce, almost. There are none of my intimate friends who can go with me. They drive out regularly, and take children with them, or they have other objects; and one cannot ask a mere acquaintance. So I go alone, which is not very exhil rating."

"Your own children are not at home?"

"No—if they were, I should need no other company for the carriage. The society of young people is pleasant to me, but Adelaide is at Madame —'s and Ernest is with a German clergyman, a friend of his father's. I fancy my rides would be of much greater service to me if I had a pleasant companion or two."

"Undoubtedly—and I know a lady and her daughter to whom a regular morning airing with such society as that of Mrs. Waldorf would be the very

breath of life! What a pity that etiquette comes in the way of so many good things! But go on, I beg."

"Etiquette! say not another word, doctor—who and where are these friends or patients of yours? I should be happy if I could offer any service. I will call with you on them this very day if you like, and invite them to ride with me daily."

"Thank you a thousand times, my dear madam," said Doctor R—, "it is what I could not venture to ask. Yet I am not afraid you will not find my friends at least tolerably agreeable—but will you proceed with the account you were giving me of your daily habits—you dine at four, I believe?"

"That is our hour, but Mr. Waldorf is often detained until five, and I never dine without him. For my own part I should not care if dinner were stricken from the day. I lunch about one, and with tolerable appetite, and I never wish to eat again until supper time. We take tea, however, at seven, and—"

"Green tea, I presume—do you take it strong?"

"Oh! not very, if I take it *too* strong, I do not sleep at all."

"You sleep but indifferently, you tell me?"

"Yes, generally; and wake many times in the night; sometimes in the horrors, so that I am full of undefinable fears, and dare not open my eyes lest the objects in the room should assume terrific shapes. The very shades cast by the night-lamp have power at such times to appal me."

The doctor's professional inquiries extended to a still greater length, but he had guessed Mrs. Waldorf's complaint before he arrived at this point in the list. He had found solitude, inactivity, late hours, suppers, coffee, green tea, music and books—with not one counterbalancing item of that labor—effort—sacrifice—which has been affixed as the unchanging price of health and spirits. Mrs. Waldorf was one of the hundreds if not thousands of ladies in our land who walk through the world without ever discovering the secret of life. She had abundant wealth and a most indulgent husband, with all that this world can offer in point of comfort, and she imagined that health alone was wanting to complete her happiness. Passive happiness! what a dream!

Doctor R— was at the head of his profession, and he had some medicines at his command which are not known at the hospitals. He thought he could cure Mrs. Waldorf, but he hinted that he feared he should find her but a poor patient.

"You do not wish Mr. Waldorf to know you are under my care lest he should object to your neglecting my remedies—"

"Oh, indeed doctor, I shall be very faithful! Try me! You cannot prescribe any thing too difficult. Shall I travel to the Pyramids barefoot, and live on bread and water all the way? I am only afraid Waldorf should insist upon my taking odious drugs, and—You know cautions meeting one at every turn are so tiresome!"

"Then you are willing to undertake any remedy which is not at all disagreeable, and which may be used or omitted *à discretion*—"

"No, no—indeed you mistake me. I only beg that it may not be *too* unpleasant. I will do just as you say."

Mrs. Waldorf now had a fine color, and her eyes sparkled as of old. She had every confidence in the skill of Dr. R—, and the effort of recalling and recounting her symptoms had given an impetus to her thoughts and a quicker current to her blood.

The doctor apologized. He had an appointment and his hour had come.

"But before I leave you thus unceremoniously," he said, "it strikes me that there is a root in my garden which might be of essential service to you, to begin with at least. You know I have a little spot in which I cultivate a few rare botanical specimens. Might I venture to ask you to search for the root I speak of? It is in that little square compartment in the corner, which appears nearly vacant."

"Oh, certainly—but had I not better call John, as your own man is going away with you?"

"John! Bless my soul, my dear Madam, there is not a John in the world that I would trust in my sanctum! No hand but mine, and that of a gardener whom I employ occasionally under my own direction, ever intrudes among my pets. Let me entreat you, since I have not another moment to spare, to take this little trowel and search with your own hands until you discover an oblong white root like this—" opening a book of botanical plates and exhibiting something that looked very much like a Jerusalem artichoke—"Take that and have it washed and grated into a gill of Port, of which try ten drops in a little water three times a day. I will see you again very soon—but now I must run away—" and Doctor R— departed, leaving Mrs. Waldorf in a musing mood.

She cast a look at the garden, which lay just beneath the window, full of flowers; then at the trowel—a strange implement in her hand. She thought Doctor R— very odd, certainly, but she resolved to follow his directions implicitly. She went down stairs and was soon digging very zealously. Her glove was split by the first effort, of course; for a fashionably fitted glove admits not the free exercise of the muscles—but all was of no avail. Every corner of the little square was disturbed, but no talisman appeared. Weary at length of her new employment, Mrs. Waldorf gave up in despair, and sat down in a little arbor which offered its shade invitingly near her. Here she sank into a pleasant reverie, as one can scarcely help doing in a garden full of sweet flowers, and so pleasant was the sense of repose after labor, that she thought not of the lapse of time until she was startled by the voice of Doctor R—, returned from his visit and exceedingly surprised to find her still trowel in hand.

"Why, my dear Madam," he exclaimed, "you are forgetting your wish that Mr. Waldorf should not discover your visit to me! If he walks much in town he has had ample opportunity to observe his carriage at my door these two hours. You must learn to carry on clandestine affairs better than this! Have you the medicine?"

Mrs. Waldorf laughed and related her ill success, which the doctor very much regretted, although he did not offer to assist in the search.

"You are feeling tolerably well just now, I think," he said; "your color is better than when you came in the morning."

"Oh yes! much better just now! But how charming your garden is! I do not wonder that you make a pet of it. We too have a few square inches of garden, but it gives me but little pleasure, because I have never done any thing to it myself. I think I shall get a trowel of my own."

"You delight me! You have only to cultivate and bring to perfection a single bed of carnations, to become as great an enthusiast as myself. But it must be done by your own hands—"

"Yes, certainly; but now I must be gone. Tomorrow I will hold myself in readiness to call on your friends at any hour you will appoint."

"What say you to eleven? Would that be too barbarous? The air is worth a good deal more at eleven than at one."

"At seven, if you like! Do not imagine me so very a slave to absurd fashions! I am determined you shall own me a reasonable woman yet."

Mrs. Waldorf called from the carriage window—"You'll not forget to send the medicine, doctor?"

"Certainly not! you shall have it at seven this evening, and I trust you will take it with exact regularity."

"Do not fear me," she said, and the doctor made his bow of adieu.

The medicine came at seven, with a sediment which looked not a little like grated potato, and without the slightest disagreeable taste. Accompanying directions required the disuse, for the present, of coffee and green tea; and recommended to Mrs. Waldorf a daily walk and a very early bed-hour.

The lady took her ten drops at nine, and felt so much better that she could not help telling her husband all about her visit to Doctor R—.

The next morning proved cloudy, and Mrs. Waldorf felt rather languid, but, after her dose, found an improved appetite for breakfast. She sat down to her music, but looked frequently at the clouds and at her watch, thinking of her appointment. When the hour arrived the envious skies poured down such showers as will damp any body's ardor. The drive must be given up for that day, and it passed as usual, with only the interlude of the magic drops.

The next day was as bad, and the day after not a great deal better. Mrs. Waldorf's pains and palpitations almost discouraged her. She was quite sure she had a liver complaint. But on the fourth morning the sun rose gloriously, and the face of nature, clean washed, shone with renewed beauty. At eleven the carriage and the lady were at Doctor R—'s door.

"Have you courage to see an invalid—a sad sufferer?" said the doctor.

"Oh, certainly! I am an invalid myself, you know."

"Ah! my dear lady, my invalid wears a different

aspect! Yet I hope she is going to recover, and I shall trust to your humanity if the scene prove a sad one. Sickness of the mind was, I think, the origin of the evil, but it has almost overpowered the frail body. This young lady and her mother have been giving lessons in music and in Italian, and have had but slender success in the whirl of competition. As nearly as I can discover, they came to this country hoping to find reverse of fortune easier to bear among strangers; and their course was determined hitherward in consequence of earlier family troubles which drove a son of Madame Vamiglia to America. He was a liberal, and both displeased his father and put himself in danger from government, by some unsuccessful attempt at home. The father is since dead, and the old lady and her daughter, left in poverty and loneliness, determined on following the young man to the new world. But here we are."

And they stopped before a small house in a back street. Mrs. Waldorf was shown into a very humble parlor, while the doctor went to prepare his patient. He returned presently with Madame Vamiglia, a well-bred woman past middle age. She expressed her grateful sense of Mrs. Waldorf's kindness, but their communication was rather pantomimical, for the lady found her song-Italian of little service, and the signora had not much conversational English. However, with some French, and occasional aid from Doctor R—, their acquaintance was somewhat ripened before they went to the bedside of the sufferer. Mrs. Waldorf turned pale, and felt ready to faint, at the sight which presented itself.

There was a low, narrow couch in the centre of the room, scarce larger than an infant's crib, and on it lay what seemed a mere remnant of mortality. Large dark eyes, full of a sort of preternatural light, alone spoke of life and motion. The figure had been always extremely small, and was now wasted till it scarce lifted the light covering of the mattress. Madame Vamiglia went forward and spoke in a low tone to her daughter, and Mrs. Waldorf was glad to sink into the chair set for her by Doctor R—. The ghastly appearance of the poor girl had quite *unwomaned* her.

The mother introduced her guest to her daughter, who could only look an acknowledgment; and then asked the doctor if he thought it possible that *Ip-polita* could bear the motion of a carriage.

"She seems weaker to-day," he replied; "very weak indeed. Yet, if Mrs. Waldorf will allow the mattress to be put in, I think we may venture."

Madame Vamiglia seemed full of anxiety lest the experiment should prove too much for the flickering remnant of life; but, after much preparation, John was called, and the poor sufferer transferred, mattress and all, to the back seat. Mrs. Waldorf and her mother took the front, and in this way they drove slowly out towards the country.

At first the poor little signorina seemed exhausted almost unto death, and her mother watched her with the most agonized solicitude; but after awhile she became accustomed to the gentle motion, and seemed revived by the fresh air. As the road wound through

a green lane shaded with old trees, Ippolita looked about her with animation, and made a sign of pleasure with her wasted hand. Tears started to her mother's eyes, and she looked to Mrs. Waldorf for sympathy, and not in vain.

At length the invalid murmured, "Assia!" and they turned about. When they reached the lodging-house, Ippolita was in a quiet sleep, and they carried her back to her own room almost undisturbed.

"To-morrow at eleven!" whispered Mrs. Waldorf, at parting. Madame Vamiglia pressed her hand, but could not speak.

We need not describe the morning rides which succeeded this auspicious commencement. We need not trace, step by step, the slow amendment of the young Italian, nor attempt to express, by words, the gratitude of both mother and daughter. They felt words to be totally inadequate. We may mention, however, the rapid improvement of Mrs. Waldorf's health and spirits, which must of course be ascribed to that excellent medicine of Doctor R——'s. This enabled that lady to study Italian most strenuously, both at home and by familiar lessons from Madame Vamiglia and her daughter, during their prolonged excursions. This pursuit was never found to increase the palpitations, and seemed also a specific against headache.

Before Ippolita had so far recovered as to be independent of the daily airing, Mrs. Waldorf picked up a new object of interest. We say picked up, for it was a road-side acquaintance, and, as Mrs. Waldorf has since observed, one which she never would have made if she had been reading during her ride, as was her custom formerly. She had, every morning for some time, observed a poor woman drawing a basket-wagon of curious construction, in which lay a child much larger than is usually found in such vehicles. The child was pretty, and tastefully, though plainly, drest; but the whole establishment bespoke any thing but abundant means, so that Mrs. Waldorf was puzzled to make out the character of the group. The woman had not the air of a servant, and yet the child did not look as if it could be her child. In short, after seeing the same thing a dozen times, Mrs. Waldorf's curiosity was a good deal excited.

She did not, however, venture to make any inquiries until it so chanced that, in the very green lane we have spoken of—the favorite resort of the grateful Ippolita—they found the poor woman, with the child fainting in her arms. Grief and anxiety were painted on her honest face, and she was so absorbed in her efforts for the recovery of the child that she scarcely answered Mrs. Waldorf's sympathizing inquiries.

"Oh don't trouble yourself, ma'am! It is nothing new! She's this way very often. It's the hoopin'-cough, ma'am; and I'm afeard it'll be the death of her, poor lamb! in spite of all we can do!" And she tossed the child in the air, and fanned its face till the breath returned.

"Is it your own?" asked Mrs. Waldorf.

"No indeed, ma'am! mine are other guess lookin'

children, thank God! This dear babe's mother is a delicate young lady that lives neighbor to me, as has a sick husband that she can't leave. I'm a washerwoman, ma'am, if you please, and I have to go quite away down town every day almost, and so I take this poor thing in my basket—it's large enough, you see—and so gives her a turn in the open air, 'cause the doctor says it's the open air, if any thing, that'll do her good."

"You are very good," said Mrs. Waldorf, who had listened in a kind of reverie, her thoughts reverting to her lonely rides.

"Oh no, ma'am! it's far from good I am! The Lord knows that! But a little bit of neighborly kindness like that, is what the poor often does for one another, *and don't think any thing of it, neither!* To be sure this babe's mother is n't the likes of me, ma'am, but she's far worse off than she has been. Her husband is what they call an accountant—a kind of clerk, like; and he can't get no employ, and I think it's breakin' his heart pretty fast."

Here Mrs. Waldorf fairly burst into tears. "Tell me where you live," she said, "and say nothing to this lady you speak of, but come to me to-morrow, will you?" and she put a card into the poor woman's hand.

"Surely I will, ma'am," said the washerwoman, "and it's a kind heart you have!"

Mrs. Waldorf rode home with her heart and head full. "How could I ever content myself with giving *money*," she said to herself, "when there is so much to be *done*!"

"How do you find yourself, this morning, my dear madam?" said Doctor —, shortly after this.

"Oh, quite well, thank you!"

"What! no more lassitude! no more headaches?"

"Nothing of the sort, I assure you! I never felt better."

"When did your symptoms abate?"

"I can scarcely tell; I have been too much occupied of late, to think of symptoms. I am so much interested in the study of Italian that I am going to ask Madame Vamiglia and her daughter to come to us for awhile, and we shall have Adelaide at home to take advantage of so good an opportunity for learning to converse."

"And your ardor in searching out the distressed has been the means of restoring the son to the mother! How happy you must be!"

"That is a happiness which I owe to you! and Mr. Waldorf is going to employ Mr. Vamiglia, who understands and writes half a dozen different languages, and will be invaluable to him. But first the family are to go to the sea-shore for a month, to recruit; and I imagine they will need a good deal of preparation—so that I have really no time to be ill."

"Then you have given up the going to the Pyramids?"

"Ah! my dear sir! I must thank you for showing me better sources of interest and excitement. I believe it must have been a little *ruse* on your part—

say! was not that famous medicine of yours only a trick—an *inganno felice*?”

“A trick! Oh! excuse me! ‘Call it by some better name!’ I beseech you,” said the doctor laughing, “it was a most valuable medicine! Indeed the whole *Materia Medica* would be often powerless

without the *placebo*! But I confess I could not think of sending you to the Pyramids, when there are not only pyramids but mountains of sorrow and suffering at home, which shun the eye of common charity, but which must be surmounted by just such heads, hearts and purses as those of Mrs. Waldorf!

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A RACE FOR A SWEETHEART.

BY MR. SEBA SMITH.

HARDLY any event creates a stronger sensation in a thinly settled New England village, especially among the young folks, than the arrival of a fresh and blooming miss, who comes to make her abode in the neighborhood. When, therefore, Squire Johnson, the only lawyer in the place, and a very respectable man of course, told Farmer Jones one afternoon that his wife's sister, a smart girl of eighteen, was coming in a few days to reside in his family, the news flew like wildfire through Pond village, and was the principal topic of conversation for a week. Pond village is situated upon the margin of one of those numerous and beautiful sheets of water that gem the whole surface of New England, like the bright stars in an evening sky, and received its appellation to distinguish it from two or three other villages in the same town, which could not boast of a similar location. When Farmer Jones came in to his supper about sunset that afternoon, and took his seat at the table, the eyes of the whole family were upon him, for there was a peculiar working about his mouth and a knowing glance of his eye, that always told them when he had something of interest to communicate. But Farmer Jones' secretiveness was large, and his temperament not the most active, and he would probably have rolled the important secret as a sweet morsel under his tongue for a long time, had not Mrs. Jones, who was of rather an impatient and prying turn of mind, contrived to draw it from him.

"Now, Mr. Jones," said she, as she handed him his cup of tea, "what is it you are going to say? Do out with it; for you've been chawing something or other over in your mind ever since you came into the house."

"It's my tobacher, I s'pose," said Mr. Jones, with another knowing glance of his eye."

"Now, father, what is the use?" said Susan; "we all know you've got something or other you want to say, and why cant you tell us what 't is?"

"La, who cares what 't is?" said Mrs. Jones; "if it was any thing worth telling, we should n't have to wait for it, I dare say."

Hereupon Mrs. Jones assumed an air of the most perfect indifference, as the surest way of conquering what she was pleased to call Mr. Jones' obstinacy, which by the way was a very improper term to apply in the case; for it was purely the working of secretiveness without the least particle of obstinacy attached to it.

There was a pause for two or three minutes in the conversation, till Mr. Jones passed his cup to be filled

a second time, when with a couple of preparatory hems he began to let out the secret.

"We are to have a new neighbor here in a few days," said Mr. Jones, stopping short when he had uttered thus much, and sipping his tea and filling his mouth with food.

Mrs. Jones, who was perfect in her tactics, said not a word, but attended to the affairs of the table, as though she had not noticed what was said. The farmer's secretiveness had at last worked itself out, and he began again.

"Squire Johnson's wife's sister is coming here in a few days, and is going to live with 'em."

The news being thus fairly divulged, it left free scope for conversation.

"Well, I wonder if she is a proud, stuck up piece," said Mrs. Jones.

"I should n't think she would be," said Susan, "for there aint a more sociabler woman in the neighborhood than Miss Johnson. So if she's at all like her sister I think we shall like her."

"I wonder how old she is," said Stephen, who was just verging toward the close of his twenty-first year.

"The squire called her eighteen," said Mr. Jones, giving a wink to his wife, as much as to say, that's about the right age for Stephen.

"I wonder if she is handsome," said Susan, who was somewhat vain of her own looks, and having been a sort of reigning belle in Pond village for some time, felt a little alarm at the idea of a rival.

"I dare be bound she's handsome," said Mrs. Jones, "if she's sister to Miss Johnson; for where 'll you find a handsomer woman than Miss Johnson, go the town through?"

After supper, Stephen went down to Mr. Robinson's store, and told the news to young Charles Robinson and all the young fellows who were gathered there for a game at quoits and a ring at wrestling. And Susan went directly over to Mr. Bean's and told Patty, and Patty went round to the Widow Davis' and told Sally, and before nine o'clock the matter was pretty well understood in about every house in the village.

At the close of the fourth day, a little before sunset, a chaise was seen to drive up to Squire Johnson's door. Of course the eyes of the whole village were turned in that direction. Sally Davis, who was just coming in from milking, set her pail down on the grass by the side of the road as soon as the chaise came in sight, and watched it till it reached the squire's door, and the gentleman and lady had got out and gone into the house. Patty Bean was doing

up the ironing that afternoon, and she had just taken a hot iron from the fire as the chaise passed the door, and she ran with it in her hand and stood on the door steps till the whole ceremony of alighting, greeting, and entering the house, was over. Old Mrs. Bean stood with her head out of the window, her iron-bowed spectacles resting upon the top of her forehead, her shriveled hand placed across her eyebrows to defend her red eyes from the rays of the setting sun, and her skinny chin protruding about three inches in advance of a couple of stubs of teeth, which her open mouth exposed fairly to view.

"Seems to me they are dreadful loving," said old Mrs. Bean, as she saw Mrs. Johnson descend the steps and welcome her sister with a kiss.

"La me, if there isn't the squire kissing of her tu," said Patty; "well, I declare, I would a waited till I got into the house, I'll die if I would n't. It looks so vulgar to be kissing afore folks, and out doors tu; I should think Squire Johnson would be ashamed of himself."

"Well, I should n't," said young John Bean, who came up at that moment, and who had passed the chaise just as the young lady alighted from it. "I should n't be ashamed to kiss sich a pretty gal as that any how; I'd kiss her wherever I could ketch her, if it was in the meetin-house."

"Why, is she handsome, Jack?" said Patty.

"Yes, she's got the prettiest little puckery kind of a mouth I've seen this six months. Her cheeks are red, and her eyes shine like new buttons."

"Well," replied Patty, "if she'll only take the shine off of Susan Jones when she goes to meetin, Sunday, I sha' n't care."

While these observations were going on at old Mr. Bean's, Charles Robinson and a group of young fellows with him were standing in front of Robinson's store, a little farther down the road, and watching the scene that was passing at Squire Johnson's. They witnessed the whole with becoming decorum, now and then making a remark about the fine horse and the handsome chaise, till they saw the tall squire bend his head down and give the young lady a kiss, when they all burst out into a loud laugh. In a moment, being conscious that their laugh must be heard and noticed at the squire's, they, in order to do away the impression it must necessarily make, at once turned their heads the other way, and Charles Robinson, who was quick at an expedient, knocked off the hat of the lad who was standing next to him, and then they all laughed louder than before.

"Here comes Jack Bean," said Charles, "now we shall hear something about her, for Jack was coming by the squire's when she got out of the chaise. How does she look, Jack?"

"Handsome as a pieter," said Jack. "I haint seen a prettier gal since last Thanksgiving Day, when Jane Ford was here to visit Susan Jones."

"Black eyes or blue?" said Charles.

"Blue," said Jack, "but all-fired bright."

"Tall or short?" said Stephen Jones, who was rather short himself, and therefore felt a particular interest on that point.

"Rather short," said Jack, "but straight and round as our young colt."

"Do you know what her name is?" said Charles.

"They called her Lucy when she got out of the chaise," said Jack, "and as Miss Johnson's name was Brown before she was married, I s'pose her name must be Lucy Brown."

"Just such a name as I like," said Charles Robinson; "Lucy Brown sounds well. Now suppose, in order to get acquainted with her, we all hands take a sail to-morrow night, about this time, on the pond and invite her to go with us."

"Agreed," said Stephen Jones. "Agreed," said Jack Bean. "Agreed," said all hands.

The question then arose, who should carry the invitation to her; and the young men being rather bashful on that score, it was finally settled that Susan Jones should bear the invitation, and accompany her to the boat, where they should all be in waiting to receive her. The next day was a very long day, at least to most of the young men of Pond village; and promptly, an hour before sunset, most of them were assembled, with half a score of their sisters and female cousins, by a little stone wharf on the margin of the pond, for the proposed sail. All the girls in the village, of a suitable age, were there, except Patty Bean. She had undergone a good deal of fidgeting and fussing during the day, to prepare for the sail, but had been disappointed. Her new bonnet was not done; and as for wearing her old flap-sided bonnet, she declared she would not, if she never went. Presently Susan Jones and Miss Lucy Brown were seen coming down the road. In a moment all were quiet, the laugh and the joke were hushed, and each one put on his best looks. When they arrived, Susan went through the ceremony of introducing Miss Brown to each of the ladies and gentlemen present.

"But how in the world are you going to sail?" said Miss Brown, "for there isn't a breath of wind; and I don't see any sail-boat, neither."

"Oh, the less wind we have, the better, when we sail here," said Charles Robinson; "and there is our sail-boat," pointing to a flat-bottomed scow-boat, some twenty feet long by ten wide.

"We don't use no sails," said Jack Bean; "sometimes, when the wind is fair, we put up a bush to help pull along a little, and when 'tis n't, we row."

The party were soon embarked on board the scow, and a couple of oars were set in motion, and they glided slowly and pleasantly over as lovely a sheet of water as ever glowed in the sunseting ray. In one hour's time, the whole party felt perfectly acquainted with Miss Lucy Brown. She had talked in the most lively and fascinating manner; she had told stories and sung songs. Among others, she had given Moore's boat song, with the sweetest possible effect; and by the time they returned to the landing, it would hardly be too much to say that half the young men in the party were decidedly in love with her.

A stern regard to truth requires a remark to be made here, not altogether favorable to Susan Jones,

which is the more to be regretted, as she was in the main an excellent hearted girl, and highly esteemed by the whole village. It was observed that as the company grew more and more pleased with Miss Lucy Brown, Susan Jones was less and less animated, till at last she became quite reserved, and apparently sad. She, however, on landing, treated Miss Brown with respectful attention, accompanied her home to Squire Johnson's door, and cordially bade her good night.

The casual glimpses which the young men of Pond village had of Miss Brown during the remainder of the week, as she occasionally stood at the door, or looked out at the window, or once or twice when she walked out with Susan Jones, and the fair view they all had of her at meeting on the Sabbath, served but to increase their admiration, and to render her more and more an object of attraction. She was regarded by all as a prize, and several of them were already planning what steps it was best to take in order to win her. The two most prominent candidates, however, for Miss Brown's favor, were Charles Robinson and Stephen Jones. Their position and standing among the young men of the village seemed to put all others in the back ground. Charles, whose father was wealthy, had every advantage which money could procure. But Stephen, though poor, had decidedly the advantage over Charles in personal recommendations. He had more talent, was more sprightly and intelligent, and more pleasing in his address. From the evening of the sail on the pond, they had both watched every movement of Miss Brown with the most intense interest; and, as nothing can deceive a lover, each had, with an interest no less intense, watched every movement of the other. They had ceased to speak to each other about her, and if her name was mentioned in their presence, both were always observed to color.

The second week after her arrival, through the influence of Squire Johnson, the district school was offered to Miss Brown on the other side of the pond, which offer was accepted, and she went immediately to take charge of it. This announcement at first threw something of a damper upon the spirits of the young people of Pond village. But when it was understood the school would continue but a few weeks, and being but a mile and a half distant, Miss Brown would come home every Saturday afternoon, and spend the Sabbath, it was not very difficult to be reconciled to the temporary arrangement. The week wore away heavily, especially to Charles Robinson and Stephen Jones. They counted the days impatiently till Saturday, and on Saturday they counted the long and lagging hours till noon. They had both made up their minds that it would be dangerous to wait longer, and they had both resolved not to let another Sabbath pass without making direct proposals to Miss Brown.

Stephen Jones was too early a riser for Charles Robinson, and, in any enterprise where both were concerned, was pretty sure to take the lead, except where money could carry the palm, and then, of

course, it was always borne away by Charles. As Miss Lucy had been absent most of the week, and was to be at home that afternoon, Charles Robinson had made an arrangement with his mother and sisters to have a little tea party in the evening, for the purpose of inviting Miss Brown; and then, of course, he should walk home with her in the evening; and then, of course, would be a good opportunity to break the ice, and make known to her his feelings and wishes. Stephen Jones, however, was more prompt in his movements. He had got wind of the proposed tea party, although himself and sister, for obvious reasons, had not been invited, and he resolved not to risk the arrival of Miss Brown and her visit to Mr. Robinson's, before he should see her. She would dismiss her school at noon, and come the distance of a mile and a half round the pond home. His mind was at once made up. He would go round and meet her at the school-house, and accompany her on her walk. There, in that winding road around those delightful waters, with the tall and shady trees over head, and the wild grape-vines twining round their trunks, and climbing to the branches, while the wild birds were singing through the woods, and the wild ducks playing in the coves along the shore, surely there, if any where in the world, could a man bring his mind up to the point of speaking of love.

Accordingly, a little before noon, Stephen washed and brushed himself up, and put on his Sunday clothes, and started on his expedition. In order to avoid observation, he took a back route across the field, intending to come into the road by the pond, a little out of the village. As ill luck would have it, Charles Robinson had been out in the same direction, and was returning with an armful of green boughs and wild flowers, to ornament the parlor for the evening. He saw Stephen, and noticed his dress, and the direction he was going, and he at once smoked the whole business. His first impulse was to rush upon him and collar him, and demand that he should return back. But then he recollected that in the last scratch he had with Stephen, two or three years before, he had a little the worst of it, and he instinctively stood still while Stephen passed on without seeing him. It flashed upon his mind at once that the question must now be reduced to a game of speed. If he could by any means gain the school-house first, and engage Miss Lucy to walk home with him, he should consider himself safe. But if Stephen should reach the school-house first, he should feel a good deal of uneasiness for the consequences. Stephen was walking very leisurely, and unconscious that he was in any danger of a competitor on the course, and it was important that his suspicions should not be awakened. Charles, therefore, remained perfectly quiet till Stephen had got a little out of hearing, and then he threw down his bushes and flowers, and ran to the wharf below the store with his utmost speed. He had one advantage over Stephen. He was ready at a moment's warning to start on an expedition of this kind, for Sunday clothes were an every-day affair with him.

There was a light canoe, belonging to his father, lying at the wharf, and a couple of stout boys were there fishing. Charles hailed them, and told them if they would row him across the pond as quick as they possibly could, he would give them a quarter of a dollar a piece. This, in their view, was a splendid offer for their services, and they jumped on board with alacrity and manned the oars. Charles took a paddle, and stood in the stern to steer the boat, and help propel her ahead. The distance by water was a little less than by land, and although Stephen had considerably the start of him, he believed he should be able to reach the school-house first, especially if Stephen should not see him and quicken his pace. In one minute after he arrived at the wharf, the boat was under full way. The boys laid down to the oars with right good will, and Charles put out all his strength upon the paddle. They were shooting over the water twice as fast as a man could walk, and Charles already felt sure of the victory. But when they had gone about half a mile, they came in the range of a little opening in the trees on the shore, where the road was exposed to view, and there, at that critical moment, was Stephen pursuing his easy walk. Charles' heart was in his mouth. Still it was possible Stephen might not see them, for he had not yet looked round. Lest the sound of the oars might attract his attention, Charles had instantly, on coming in sight, ordered the boys to stop rowing, and he grasped his paddle with breathless anxiety, and waited for Stephen again to disappear. But just as he was upon the point of passing behind some trees, where the boat would be out of his sight, Stephen turned his head and looked round. He stopped short, turned square round, and stood for the space of a minute looking steadily at the boat. Then lifting his hand, and shaking his first resolutely at Charles, as much as to say I understand you, he started into a quick run.

"Now, boys," said Charles, "buckle to your oars for your lives, and if you get to the shore so I can reach the school-house before Stephen does, I'll give you half a dollar apiece."

This of course added new life to the boys and increased speed to the boat. Their little canoe flew over the water almost like a bird, carrying a white bone in her mouth, and leaving a long ripple on the glassy wave behind her. Charles' hands trembled, but still he did good execution with his paddle. Although Stephen upon the run was a very different thing from Stephen at a slow walk, Charles still had strong hopes of winning the race and gaining his point. He several times caught glimpses of Stephen through the trees, and, as well as he could judge, the boat had a little the best of it. But when they came out into the last opening, where for a little way they

had a fair view of each other, Charles thought Stephen ran faster than ever: and although he was now considerably nearer the school-house than Stephen was, he still trembled for the result. They were now within fifty rods of the shore, and Charles appealed again to the boys' love of money.

"Now," said he, "we have not a minute to spare. If we gain the point, I'll give you a dollar apiece."

The boys strained every nerve, and Charles' paddle made the water fly like the tail of a wounded shark. When within half a dozen rods of the shore, Charles urged them again to spring with all their might, and one of the boys making a desperate plunge upon his oar, snapped it in two. The first pull of the other oar headed the boat from land. Charles saw at once that the delay must be fatal, if he depended on the boat to carry him ashore. The water was but three feet deep, and the bottom was sandy. He sprung from the boat, and rushed toward the shore as fast as he was able to press through the water. He flew up the bank, and along the road, till he reached the school-house. The door was open, but he could see no one within. Several children were at play round the door, who, having seen Charles approach with such haste, stood with mouths and eyes wide open, looking at him.

"Where's the schoolma'm?" said Charles, hastily, to one of the largest boys.

"Why?" said the boy, opening his eyes still wider, "is any of the folks dead?"

"You little rascal, I say, where's the schoolma'm?"

"She jest went down that road," said the boy, "two or three minutes ago."

"Was she alone?" said Charles.

"She started alone," said the boy, "and a man met her out there a little ways, and turned about and went with her."

Charles felt that his cake was all dough again, and that he might as well give it up for a bad job, and go home. Stephen Jones and Lucy Brown walked *very* leisurely home through the woods, and Charles and the boys went very leisurely in the boat across the pond. They even stopped by the way, and caught a mess of fish, since the boys had thrown their lines into the boat when they started. And when they reached the wharf, Charles, in order to show that he had been a fishing, took a large string of the fish in his hand, and carried them up to the house. Miss Lucy Brown, on her way home through the woods, had undoubtedly been informed of the proposed tea-party for the evening, to which she was to be invited, and to which Stephen Jones and Susan Jones were not invited; and when Miss Lucy's invitation came, she sent word back, that she was *engaged*.

A RAINY EVENING.

A SKETCH.

BY MRS. C. LEE HENTZ.

A PLEASANT little group was gathered round uncle Ned's domestic hearth. He sat on one side of the fire-place, opposite aunt Mary, who, with her book in her hand, watched the children seated at the table, some reading, others sewing, all occupied, but one, a child "of larger growth," a young lady, who, being a guest of the family, was suffered to indulge in the pleasure of idleness without reproach.

"Oh! I love a rainy evening," said little Ann, looking up from her book, and meeting her mother's smiling glance, "it is so nice to sit by a good fire and hear the rain pattering against the windows. Only I pity the poor people who have no house to cover them, to keep off the rain and the cold."

"And I love a rainy evening too," cried George, a boy of about twelve. "I can study so much better. My thoughts stay at home, and don't keep rambling out after the bright moon and stars. My heart feels warmer, and I really believe I love every body better than I do when the weather is fair."

Uncle Ned smiled and gave the boy an approving pat on the shoulder. Every one smiled but the young lady, who, with a languid, discontented air, now played with a pair of scissors, now turned over the leaves of a book, then with an ill suppressed yawn, leaned idly on her elbow and looked into the fire.

"And what do you think of a rainy evening, Elizabeth?" asked uncle Ned. "I should like to hear your opinion also."

"I think it over dull and uninteresting indeed," answered she. "I always feel so stupid, I can hardly keep myself awake—one cannot go abroad, or hope to see company at home; and one gets so tired of seeing the same faces all the time. I cannot imagine what George and Ann see to admire so much in a disagreeable rainy evening like this."

"Supposing I tell you a story to enliven you," said uncle Ned.

"Oh! yes, father, please tell us a story," exclaimed the children simultaneously.

Little Ann was perched upon his knee as if by magic, and even Elizabeth moved her chair, as if excited to some degree of interest. George still held his book in his hand, but his bright eyes, sparkling with unusual animation, were riveted upon his uncle's face.

"I am going to tell you a story about a rainy evening," said uncle Ned.

"Oh! that will be so pretty!" cried Ann, clapping her hands; but Elizabeth's countenance fell below zero. It was an ominous announcement.

"Yes," continued uncle Ned, "a rainy evening. But though clouds darker than those which now mantle the sky were lowering abroad, and the rain fell heavier and faster, the rainbow of my life was drawn most beautifully on those dark clouds, and its fair colours still shine most lovely on the sight. It is no longer, however, the bow of promise, but the realization of my fondest dreams."

George saw his uncle cast an expressive glance towards the handsome matron in the opposite corner, whose colour perceptibly heightened, and he could not forbear exclaiming—

"Ah! aunt Mary is blushing. I understand uncle's metaphor. She is his rainbow, and he thinks life one long rainy day."

"Not exactly so. I mean your last conclusion. But don't interrupt me, my boy, and you shall hear a lesson, which, young as you are, I trust you will never forget. When I was a young man I was thought quite handsome—"

"Pa is as pretty as he can be now," interrupted little Ann, passing her hand fondly over his manly cheek.

Uncle Ned was not displeased with the compliment, for he pressed her closer to him while he continued—

"Well, when I was young, I was of a gay spirit and a great favourite in society. The young ladies liked me for a partner in the dance, at the chess board, or the evening walk, and I had reason to think several of them would have made no objection to take me as a partner for life. Among all my young acquaintances, there was no one, whose companionship was so pleasing, as that of a maiden whose name was Mary. Now, there are a great many Marys in the world, so you must not take it for granted I mean your mother or aunt. At any rate you must not look so significant, till I have finished my story. Mary was a sweet and lovely girl—with a current of cheerfulness running through her disposition, that made music as it flowed. It was an under current, however, always gentle and kept within its legitimate channel; never overflowing into boisterous mirth or unmeaning levity. She was the only daughter of her mother, and she a widow. Mrs. Carlton, such was her mother's name, was in lowly circumstances, and Mary had none of the appliances of wealth and fashion to decorate her person, or gild her home. A very modest competency was all he

portion, and she wished for nothing more. I have seen her, in a simple white dress, without a single ornament, unless it was a natural rose, transcend all the gaudy belles, who sought by the attractions of dress to win the admiration of the multitude. But alas! for poor human nature! One of these dashing belles so fascinated my attention, that the gentle Mary was for a while forgotten. Theresa Vane was indeed a rare piece of mortal mechanism. Her figure was the perfection of beauty, and she moved as if strung upon wires, so elastic and springing were her gestures. I never saw such lustrous hair—it was perfectly black, and shone like burnished steel; and then such ringlets! How they waved and rippled down her beautiful neck! She dressed with the most exquisite taste, delicacy and neatness, and whatever she wore, assumed a peculiar grace and fitness, as if art loved to adorn what nature made so fair. But what charmed me most, was the sunshiny smile that was always waiting to light up her countenance. To be sure, she sometimes laughed a little too loud, but then her laugh was so musical and her teeth so white, it was impossible to believe her guilty of rudeness, or want of grace. Often, when I saw her in the social circle, so brilliant and smiling, the life and charm of every thing around her, I thought how happy the constant companionship of such a being would make me—what brightness she would impart to the fireside of home—what light, what joy to the darkest scenes of existence!”

“Oh! uncle,” interrupted George laughing, “if I were aunt Mary, I would not let you praise any other lady so warmly. You are so taken up with her beauty, you have forgotten all about the rainy evening.”

Aunt Mary smiled, but it is more than probable, that George really touched one of the hidden springs of her woman’s heart, for she looked down and said nothing.

“Don’t be impatient,” said uncle Ned, “and you shall not be cheated out of your story. I began it for Elizabeth’s sake, rather than yours, and I see she is wide awake. She thinks I was by this time more than half in love with Theresa Vane, and she thinks more than half right. There had been a great many parties of pleasure, riding parties, sailing parties, and talking parties; and summer slipped by, almost unconsciously. At length the autumnal equinox approached, and gathering clouds, north-eastern gales and drizzling rains, succeeded to the soft breezes, mellow skies and glowing sunsets, peculiar to that beautiful season. For two or three days I was confined within doors by the continuous rains, and I am sorry to confess it, but the blue devils actually got complete possession of me—one strided upon my nose, another danced on the top of my head, one pinched my ear, and another turned somersets on my chin. You laugh, little Nanny; but they are terrible creatures, these blue gentlemen, and I could not endure them any longer. So the third rainy evening, I put on my over-coat, buttoned it up to my

chin, and taking my umbrella in my hand, set out in the direction of Mrs. Vane’s. ‘Here,’ thought I, as my fingers pressed the latch, ‘I shall find the moonlight smile, that will illumine the darkness of my night—the dull vapours will disperse before her radiant glance, and this interminable equinoctial storm be transformed into a mere vernal shower, melting away in sunbeams in her presence.’ My gentle knock not being apparently heard, I stepped into the ante-room, set down my umbrella, took off my drenched over-coat, arranged my hair in the most graceful manner, and, claiming a privilege, to which perhaps I had no legitimate right, opened the door of the family sitting room, and found myself in the presence of the beautiful Theresa—”

Here uncle Ned made a provoking pause.

“Pray go on.” “How was she dressed?” “And was she glad to see you?” assailed him on every side.

“How was she dressed!” repeated he. “I am not very well skilled in the technicalities of a lady’s wardrobe, but I can give you the general impression of her personal appearance. In the first place, there was a jumping up and an offhand sliding step towards an opposite door, as I entered; but a disobliging chair was in the way, and I was making my lowest bow, before she found an opportunity of disappearing. Confused and mortified, she scarcely returned my salutation, while Mrs. Vane offered me a chair, and expressed, in somewhat dubious terms, their gratification at such an unexpected pleasure. I have no doubt Theresa wished me at the bottom of the frozen ocean, if I might judge by the freezing glances she shot at me through her long lashes. She sat uneasily in her chair, trying to conceal her slipshod shoes, and furtively arranging her dress about the shoulders and waist. It was a most rebellious subject, for the body and skirt were at open warfare, refusing to have any communion with each other. Where was the graceful shape I had so much admired? In vain I sought its exquisite outlines in the folds of that loose, slovenly robe. Where were those glistening ringlets and burnished locks that had so lately rivalled the tresses of Medusa? Her hair was put in tangled bunches behind her ears, and tucked up behind in a kind of Gordian knot, which would have required the sword of an Alexander to untie. Her frock was a soiled and dingy silk, with trimmings of fallow blonde, and a faded fancy handkerchief was thrown over one shoulder.

“‘You have caught me completely *en déshabillé*,’ said she, recovering partially from her embarrassment; ‘but the evening was so rainy, and no one but mother and myself, I never dreamed of such an exhibition of gallantry as this.’

“She could not disguise her vexation, with all her efforts to conceal it, and Mrs. Vane evidently shared her daughter’s chagrin. I was wicked enough to enjoy their confusion, and never appeared more at my ease, or played the agreeable with more signal success. I was disenchanted at

once, and my mind revelled in its recovered freedom. My goddess had fallen from the pedestal on which my imagination had enthroned her, despoiled of the beautiful drapery which had imparted to her such ideal loveliness. I knew that I was a favourite in the family, for I was wealthy and independent, and perhaps of all Theresa's admirers, what the world would call the best match. I maliciously asked her to play on the piano, but she made a thousand excuses, studiously keeping back the true reason, her disordered attire. I asked her to play a game of chess, but 'she had a headache; she was too stupid; she never *could* do anything on a rainy evening.'

"At length I took my leave, inwardly blessing the moving spirit which had led me abroad that night, that the spell which had so long enthralled my senses might be broken. Theresa called up one of her lambent smiles as I bade her adieu.

"'Never call again on a rainy evening,' said she sportively; 'I am always so wretchedly dull. I believe I was born to live among the sunbeams, the moonlight, and the stars. Clouds will never do for me.'

"'Amen,' I silently responded, as I closed the door. While I was putting on my coat, I overheard, without the smallest intention of listening, a passionate exclamation from Theresa.

"'Good heavens, mother! was there ever anything so unlucky? I never thought of seeing my neighbour's *dog* to-night. If I have not been completely caught!'

"'I hope you will mind my advice next time,' replied her mother, in a grieved tone. 'I told you not to sit down in that slovenly dress. I have no doubt you have lost him for ever.'

"Here I made good my retreat, not wishing to enter the *penetralia* of family secrets.

"The rain still continued unabated, but my social feelings were very far from being damped. I had the curiosity to make another experiment. The evening was not very far advanced, and as I turned from Mrs. Vane's fashionable mansion, I saw a modest light glimmering in the distance, and I hailed it as the shipwrecked mariner hails the star that guides him o'er ocean's foam to the home he has left behind. Though I was gay and young, and a passionate admirer of beauty, I had very exalted ideas of domestic felicity. I knew that there was many a rainy day in life, and I thought the companion who was born alone for sunbeams and moonlight, would not aid me to dissipate their gloom. I had, moreover, a shrewd suspicion, that the daughter who thought it a sufficient excuse for shameful personal neglect, that there was no one present but her *mother*, would, as a wife, be equally regardless of a *husband's* presence. While I pursued these reflections my feet involuntarily drew nearer and more near to the light, which had been the loadstone of my opening manhood. I had continued to meet Mary in the gay circles I frequented, but I had lately become almost a stranger to her home. 'Shall I be a welcome guest?' said

I to myself as I crossed the threshold. 'Shall I find her *en dishabillé* likewise, and discover that feminine beauty and grace are incompatible with a rainy evening?' I heard a sweet voice reading aloud as I opened the door, and I knew it was the voice which was once music to my ears. Mary rose at my entrance, laying her book quietly on the table, and greeted me with a modest grace and self-possession peculiar to herself. She looked surprised, a little embarrassed, but very far from being displeased. She made no allusion to my estrangement or neglect; expressed no astonishment at my untimely visit, nor once hinted that, being alone with her mother and not anticipating visitors, she thought it unnecessary to wear the habiliments of a *lady*. Never in my life had I seen her look so lovely. Her dress was perfectly plain, but every fold was arranged by the hand of the graces. Her dark-brown hair, which had a natural wave in it, now uncurled by the dampness, was put back in smooth ringlets from her brow, revealing a face which did not consider its beauty wasted because a mother's eye alone rested on its bloom. A beautiful cluster of autumnal roses, placed in a glass vase on the table, perfumed the apartment, and a bright blaze on the hearth diffused a spirit of cheerfulness around, while it relieved the atmosphere of its excessive moisture. Mrs. Carlton was an invalid, and suffered also from an inflammation of the eyes. Mary had been reading aloud to her from her favourite book. What do you think it was? It was a very old-fashioned one indeed. No other than the Bible. And Mary was not ashamed to have such a fashionable young gentleman as I then was see what her occupation had been. What a contrast to the scene I had just quitted! How I loathed myself for the infatuation which had led me to prefer the artificial graces of a belle to this pure child of nature. I drew my chair to the table, and entreated that they would not look upon me as a stranger, but as a friend, anxious to be restored to the forfeited privileges of an old acquaintance. I was understood in a moment, and, without a single reproach, was admitted again to confidence and familiarity. The hours I had wasted with Theresa seemed a kind of mesmeric slumber, a blank in my existence, or, at least, a feverish dream. 'What do you think of a rainy evening, Mary?' asked I, before I left her.

"'I love it of all things,' replied she, with animation. 'There is something so home-drawing, so heart-knitting in its influence. The dependencies which bind us to the world seem withdrawn; and, retiring within ourselves, we learn more of the deep mysteries of our own being.'

"Mary's soul beamed from her eye as it turned, with a transient obliquity, towards heaven. She paused, as if fearful of unscaling the fountains of her heart. I said that Mrs. Carlton was an invalid, and consequently retired early to her chamber; but I lingered till a late hour, nor did I go till I had made a full confession of my folly, repentance, and

awakened love; and, as Mary did not shut the door in my face, you may imagine she was not sorely displeased."

"Ah! I know who Mary was. I knew all the time," exclaimed George, looking archly at aunt Mary. A bright tear, which at that moment fell into her lap, showed, that, though a silent, she was no uninterested auditor.

"You hav'n't done, father," said little Ann, in a disappointed tone; "I thought you were going to tell a story. You have been talking about yourself all the time."

"I have been something of an egotist, to be sure, my little girl, but I wanted to show my dear young friend here how much might depend upon a rainy evening. Life is not made all of sunshine. The happiest and most prosperous must have their seasons of gloom and darkness, and woe be to those from whose souls no rays of brightness emanate to gild those darkened hours. I bless the God of the

rain as well as the sunshine. I can read His mercy and His love, as well in the tempest, whose wings obscure the visible glories of His creation, as in the splendour of the rising sun, or the soft dews that descend after his setting radiance. I began with a metaphor. I said a rainbow was drawn on the clouds that lowered on that eventful day, and that it still continued to shine with undiminished beauty. Woman, my children, was sent by God, to be the rainbow of man's darker destiny. From the glowing red, emblematic of that love which warms and gladdens his existence, to the violet melting into the blue of heaven, symbolical of the faith which links him to a purer world, her blending virtues, mingling with each other in beautiful harmony, are a token of God's mercy here, and an earnest of future blessings in those regions where no *rainy evenings* ever come to obscure the brightness of eternal day."

Original.

A SKETCH FROM LIFE.

FEW of our residents are unacquainted with that beautiful road which, lined with country seats and cottages, leads across Long Island to Bath, and returning thence by Fort Hamilton, along the Narrows, unites itself with South Brooklyn; and few there are who have ever travelled it, who will not well remember the vicinity and the sea shore of Bath, and the gently sloping bench, from which there is such an extended prospect of the ocean.

It was here, in the month of September, that a gay party was assembled in front of the large house that stands so conspicuously on the shore, enjoying the evening breeze which blew gently across the surface of the waves, while the riots of their merry laughter seemed to be borne on the wind, and sounded loud above the murmur of the water which rolled up foaming and splashing almost to their feet. Anon the sweet, tinkling sound of a guitar was heard, and a Spanish serenade from a deep, strong voice, rose upon the ear; then the guitar changed hands, and a strain of thrilling melody succeeded, so clear, so beautiful, that each one listened with deep and breathless attention, and as the music ceased, broke out in those terms of compliment which, in fashionable society, are so usual, and yet so meaningless. There was one, however, who, to an outward observer, seemed less enthusiastic in his admiration. He had gazed with fixed attention upon the accomplished and beautiful Catharine Melbourne while she sang, and as the air concluded, scarcely changing his position, he still regarded her with such attention, that one would be led to suppose that his admiration, if such it were, arose not entirely from the charms of her voice, but from some deeper and more lasting cause. He was a young man well known among the *ton*, and justly esteemed for his talents, and, what was rare—for talents and a handsome person are seldom combined—possessed of that high order of beauty which, without descending to the *exquisite*, comprizes not only regularity of feature, but that certain indescribable air, which is always so essential to manly beauty.

Frederick Kiersted had been intimate with Catharine, and more than ordinarily so, even perhaps, to the verge of that point, where intimacy changes its character, and assumes the garb of love. It was not then strange that he should be silent and thoughtful, as he gazed upon her, and knew that this was the last time he was to enjoy her society, and felt, in anticipation, that blank, which always follows the absence of one we love. Yet Catharine, herself, seemed to be all joy and happiness, now laughing and talking with her companions, now conversing of home, and of their return, as if she cared for none she left behind, and counting the hours and days to elapse before she met her friends again. Soon a general movement took place among the party; some retiring to the house, others dividing among the walks that led along the bench—for it was bright moonlight—and strolling up and down, inhaled the refreshing air which swept across the waves.

Catharine and Frederick were together, and as they became separated from the others, her gaiety seemed to give way to slight seriousness. Frederick thus addressed her.

"And do you then return to-morrow?"

"To-morrow morning early, we leave for Richmond, and I suppose it will be two days before we get there. How tedious it will be. I always think that after one sets out for home, the journey seems much longer than it really is, though perhaps the anticipation of meeting our friends, and our anxiety to see them, makes it appear so."

"But when you make new friends, you need not be so anxious for the old."

"Oh! not so, that would be inconstancy. I always prefer my old friends."

"Then I must wait a long time before I am ranked among that number," answered he laughingly, but suddenly resuming his seriousness, he added, "and when that time comes we may be far apart, perhaps never to meet again."

Catharine answered not, for she felt at that moment the momentary pang that we all experience when parting with friends, with whom however short our intercourse, we have grown to terms of intimacy, and whose tastes and dispositions corresponding with our own, have strengthened and added to that feeling, which so frequently commences with first impressions.

How true it is that we sometimes meet with those with whom we associate for a few days, a week, a month, and form friendships, and attachments, more enduring, more fervent, than many that have been ripening for years, and then how melancholy to separate with the consciousness, that unless some fortunate circumstance should bring us together we may never see each other again.

They were gone, and the young men, who had like butterflies fluttered around her, soon forgot that there ever had been such a being as Catharine Melbourne, and in other directions, sought other charms, and other prospects, though few held out such an incentive to their avarice, and ambition, in the prospect of the enjoyment of the wealth which her father was said to possess. Frederick, too, a few days afterwards, for he had only been spending some weeks at Bath, was on his way to Washington, his native place and present residence.

* * * * *

What changes, and revolutions, and miseries, and pleasures a few years will bring about, and how many hearts which beat in hope, and expectation, have during that period, been crushed and broken; and how many who stood on the summit of the car of fortune have been thrown to its very lowest step, and there cling in the vain hope that some fresh revolution will restore them to their former place.

Three years had passed, and Frederick Kiersted who had been travelling through the Southern States had lately returned to Washington, and now his mind so long occupied with agreeable and novel pursuits, no longer took that strong interest in the fair girl who had once made such a decided impression upon him.

Other faces became familiar to him. Other prospects opened before him, and when his thoughts recurred to her, it was only to remember the pleasure spent in her society and the improbability that he should ever meet with her again. The subject was recalled one day by a friend who had been intimate with her family, and some of her relations who resided in Richmond, Virginia, and whom he had visited there.

"Kingsbury," said he, "why do you not go on to Richmond? Louise has grown up a perfect sylph, and Catharine, your favorite, is more beautiful than ever,—by the by when I think of it, did I tell you that Beekman had been visiting at Catharine's, and had been introduced by her to Louise and her charming sister, which latter, between ourselves, is the only one that *he* need think of, that is unless you intend to give up your part in the chase, however long you have neglected it, which would be very foolish considering her expectations."

"Ha! ha! you look at the *expectations* then, but when have you seen them?"

"Not for a year now, and I have been intending to go on every week for three months, in fact Beekman who is more anxious than I am, insists upon my starting with him next Monday, but I think it would be more pleasant for you and I to go together. What say you?"

"Really, Paxton, are you in earnest?"

"Most assuredly I am, and if you will not go with me I will either go alone or with Beekman."

"Come then, I'll make a bargain with you. Wait two or three days and then go round by the Chesapeake with me and we'll start together."

"Why not at once?"

"Why, there is the great affair of Miss Lendeau on Friday evening, that I cannot miss; then the concert that we're both so curious about on Monday, for you know we are of the musical world, and then I have some little business on Tuesday, so that it would be at least a week before we could start."

"But about that concert; you know there is to be a young *debutante* brought out, her name is—is—Do you know?"

"No, they say she is very pretty."

"Yes. I believe she is, we had better therefore stay and see her, and then for love, so *adieu*."

The concert here spoken of by Frederick, was one which had been anticipated sometime by the musical people of the city, inasmuch as a very eminent performer had the management of it, and besides the part he himself intended to take in the performance, he had engaged to assist him, one who had never appeared on the public boards before. It was on this latter account that Frederick and his friend were particularly desirous of being present, perhaps as much for the purpose of having something new to talk about, among their fashionable friends, as for the gratification of listening to the music.

They were accordingly present on the Monday evening following, and sat in one of the front seats waiting impatiently for the conclusion of the overture and the appearance of the young *debutante*. They were not kept long in suspense, for as they looked and waited,

as they heard the whisperings and conjectures around them, there came forth and stood slightly blushing before them, yet with that forced confidence which a determined spirit can assume, the beautiful and high-born girl who was once the favorite of fortune, revelling in all the careless and unclouded gaiety of youth and innocence. —It was Catharine Melbourne! With a slight effort she subdued her rising timidity, and her clear sweet voice rose melodiously upon the ear, as Frederick listened to those tones which he had heard so often under different circumstances, his memory transported him to the sea shore and to the moonlight nights, where long ago he had last listened to those notes of harmony. She was received by the audience with the most enthusiastic applause, and it was not surprizing, for her whole soul seemed to be thrown into the words, and, as if unconscious of all around her, appeared wrapt up in the beauty, the sublimity, the touching wildness of that melody. Little thought her listeners that her young soul was then far away amid the scenes of her prosperity where her friends had admired that same air, and where *he* himself had been present gazing upon her with the impassioned look of love, and while she drank in the fervor of his admiration, never dreamed how differently they were again to meet.

Sweet Catharine! She had gained her object. She had accomplished that, which neither fame nor pecuniary advantage could have induced her to undertake, and had by her talents provided a present support for her parents, now reduced in circumstances, as to be almost wholly dependent upon her for the means of their subsistence. Her father, as my reader will remember, at her first introduction, was accounted wealthy, and might still have been so, had it not been for the unfortunate revulsion of business, which has prevailed so generally throughout the country, and which affected him more than most others, for the reason that careless through prosperity, he had risked his property in large, and venturous speculations, which had proved one after another completely disastrous, and more honorable than many others who have thus met with adversity, instead of looking ahead by providing, in some measure, for his old age and for the future, he had, by surrendering every thing to his creditors, left himself and family almost entirely destitute.

It was for them that Catharine had undertaken a task, which the result proved she was so competent to fulfil, and it was to them therefore that she owed her present success; a success which was the more gratifying as being the test by which she was to judge of her future prospects. But to see her afterwards—to see her the next day, as doubting and uncertain as to the effect her appearance would have upon those whom she had known in her prosperity, it would have been a difficult question to determine, whether she felt any pleasure in contemplating the future career, so full of promise, which seemed to be opening before her.

Two days after this, two persons might have been seen on the promenade in Washington, conversing earnestly together, and as if careless of the passers by seemed to be wholly absorbed in the conversation of each other,

and yet, as they passed, many eyes were gazing on them, and many persons turned curiously to regard, and perchance to admire them; and as they gazed it did not require much penetration, to recognize in the one, the young *debutante* of the last evening, and in the other, for *he* was generally known, Frederick Kiersted. Then he who had loved her once, he who had only known her, when she was surrounded, and flattered, by a circle of fashionable friends, and who (she thought perhaps,) had only followed with the rest in praising, and admiring her, was still the same, and her heart beat high, when she now found that she had not been by him, unremembered and forgotten.

* * * * *

Catharine Melbourne, notwithstanding her success, has not since appeared at Washington, but rumor says that she is soon about to appear in a different character, not as a candidate for public honor, but for that state which wise men have so often recommended as being most conducive to contentment and happiness.

T. C.

ALINA DERLAY; OR THE TWO CAPS.

A TALE.

BY MISS LESLIE.

(Continued from page 93.)

PART THE SECOND.

"I ACKNOWLEDGE the beauty of Madame Rubaniere's cap," said Alina—"yet still, to-morrow evening I must wear aunt Elsey's."

"Impossible!" "You are not serious!" "Can you really think of such an absurdity!" were the exclamations of Imogene, and Leonard Rochdale.

"Dear Alina, you are an extraordinary girl," said Edwin.

"Alina cannot be in earnest," pursued Imogene; "and to-morrow night too! at her own ball! when she ought to look her very best!"

"And all for the sake of a queer old aunt, near a hundred miles off," added Leonard.

"That queer old aunt," replied Alina, "was for many years a mother to me, and she still loves me with the untiring affection of a parent. It is true that the cap, which, in the kindness of her heart she has made for me, is neither tasteful nor fashionable, but very much the contrary; and I am aware that it cannot possibly look well, either on me or on any one. Yet, I cannot but think how much time and pains it cost dear aunt Elsey, how long and industriously she toiled at it, erroneously hoping that it would give me pleasure."

"It is undoubtedly her *beau ideal* of a cap," said Leonard.

"Shall I not," continued Alina, "make so small a sacrifice for her sake, as to wear it, at least for one single evening?"

"Some other evening, then," pleaded Imogene: "but not to-morrow, dearest Alina, not to-morrow, I entreat you."

"My good aunt made it expressly for my birth-night ball, and worked hard to complete it in time," answered Alina: "therefore this is the very occasion on which I ought to wear it."

"But it is on this very occasion you will be expected to look your best," persisted Imogene; "how can you call the sacrifice a small one?"

"All to-morrow evening," resumed Alina, "my

dear aunt Elsey will be thinking of me as adorned with her long-laboured cap. And she will congratulate herself on having finished it in time; imagining how I will look in it; and how I must enjoy wearing it; and what admiration it must excite in the beholders."

"Well then," said Imogene, "let her have the pleasure of imagining. It will make her happy for the time; and she need never know that you did not really wear it. Allow her always to suppose so."

"But she requests me to write her an account of the success of the cap, and to repeat to her the complimentary things that are said about it."

"She requires impossibilities," observed Leonard; "no complimentary things ever will or can be said of it; but exactly the contrary."

"You cannot, either way, escape the necessity of deceiving her," argued Imogene; "for if you wear the cap you will have to invent the compliments; and if you do not really wear it, but merely pretend to Mrs. Wendover that you have done so, she will still expect an account of the admiration."

"I can tell no falsehoods, and make no misrepresentations concerning it," replied Alina.

"Certainly you cannot," said Edwin.

"My counsel is," said Leonard, "that you write the good old lady a very affectionate letter, explaining to her that though the sewing of the cap is beautiful——"

"The needlework you mean," observed Imogene.

"Where is the difference between sewing and needlework?" inquired Leonard.

"Oh! a very great difference," replied his sister: "but were I to explain it, you would not understand."

"I thought flowering and figuring with needles was usually termed embroidery," remarked Edwin.

"So it is," answered Alina: "but the word *embroidery* is generally applied to ornamental needlework, wrought with threads of silk or gold. Our

female vocabulary is much in want of a word to express exactly and concisely the decoration of muslin or cambric by patterns worked in cotton or thread."

"The cap might possibly be tolerated," said Leonard—taking it in his hand, and turning it about—"were it not for the twelve cockades, and the numerous acute angles."

"Those angles are the points that unite the head-piece to the crown," said Imogene.

"And the picket-fence behind."

"That is the quilling of stiff ribbon at the back of the neck."

"And then those three lines of palisades defending the face."

"Those are the three upstanding frills."

"And the two redoubts, right and left, flanking the bastion that stands in front."

"I suppose you mean the two side bows, and the great middle bow."

"Exactly. The whole cap reminds me of a fortress, though some might regard it rather in the light of a block-house. I dare say, if the old lady's cranium was phrenologically examined, there would be found a prodigious development of the organ of engineering: such as, if known, would excite the envy of many of our young candidates for the military service."

"Oh! Leonard!" exclaimed Alina, "do not make such a jest of my dear old aunt. She is too kind and good to be turned into ridicule."

"It is not herself but her cap that we are making merry with," replied Leonard: "and I appeal to all present if I have not given due honour to the mathematical skill that constructed that head-cover. You cannot refrain from laughing yourself, amiable as you certainly are, my sweet cousin. But, jesting apart, if you manage the affair adroitly, you may spare yourself the infiction of this cap of cups, and the dear old lady need never know a syllable of the matter. Nothing will be more easy than to keep the secret from her."

"I cannot deceive aunt Elsey," answered Alina.

"Now I should think that nothing in the world would be more easy," returned Leonard; "unless she possesses the magic mirror of the fairy tale, that shows us what our absent friends are doing at the very moment we are consulting the glass."

"I never heard that story," interrupted little Cora. "I dare say it is beautiful. Dear Leonard, won't you tell it me as soon as we are all done talking about the cap?"

"Edwin will relate it to you," replied Leonard: "He is much better versed in fairy tales than I am, and he never omits the most trifling particulars."

"That is because he likes so much to give everybody all the pleasure he can," said Cora. "But come now, get through the cap very fast, all of you, that there may be time for Edwin to tell me that story before I go to bed. Won't you, dear Edwin?"

Edwin nodded assent, and Cora seated herself

on one of the ottoman foot-cushions to be ready— for awhile saying nothing more on the subject of the cap, for fear of assisting to prolong the discussion.

"There would be little difficulty in deceiving aunt Elsey," proceeded Alina, "provided I could bring my mind to make the attempt; and to follow it up without shrinking from the series of deceptions which that attempt would involve. For instance, when I reply to her letter, shall I falsely tell her that I *did* wear the cap on my birthday ball, just as she intended? When she wrote again, I know she would express her satisfaction, and ask me further particulars; and I should be obliged (either directly or indirectly) to reiterate the falsehood in a second letter. Then at my next meeting with my dear aunt, she will talk to me about it; and how then shall I be able to look her in the face? Will not my cheeks blush, and my tongue falter, and my eyes seek the ground? The shame and compunction I shall then feel will be far greater than any little annoyance or mortification I may experience from wearing, for one night only, an antiquated, unbecoming head-dress."

"Well, well," said Leonard, "since you are so conscientious about a little harmless deception—"

"Deception may appear harmless at first," remarked Edwin; "but in the end it always produces evil; and rarely fails to punish its perpetrators by the confusion and repentance it brings upon them."

"Consider it not so deeply," said Leonard, laying his hand on his brother's shoulder."

"Dear Alina," resumed Imogene, "let me propose a plan. Wear, as you first intended, Madame Rubaniere's beautiful little cap, and look as you ought at your birth-night ball. Then to-morrow, write one of your usual charming letters to Mrs. Wendover; inform her candidly that you have *not* worn her cap. As delicately as possible give her your reasons, and promise to take the greatest care of it: reserving it new, clean, and unrumpled, for your next visit to Brookfield. You know how much she loves you; and you may be assured that her affection will not allow her to make you a single reproach on the subject."

"I well know the warmth and the steadiness of dear aunt Elsey's regard for me," replied Alina; "and therefore I will not abuse it. I feel very certain that there is little danger of our meetings being embittered by her taking me to task for anything that may have occurred since our last separation. When we are together she is so happy that all is sunshine on her part, and I hope on mine also. Were I, indeed, to excuse myself from wearing her cap to-morrow, I should have nothing to fear from *her* reproaches, but very much from my own. I continually look back with gratitude upon all her kindness to me; especially during the troublesome days of my early childhood. How prone was aunt Elsey to excuse my faults, and my follies; how anxious to gratify and even to anticipate my wishes, and to procure for me all the little pleasures and enjoyments within my reach. I was neither threatened nor pun-

ish; but she governed me entirely by love. When I was ill, how carefully she watched, how tenderly she nursed me. Before I could read, how patiently she would amuse me by the hour with stories of which I never grew tired."

"I don't wonder you love her," said Cora. "Indeed, I now think you ought to wear the cap."

"You are a dear good girl, Alina," said Imogene Rochdale; "but still, I cannot reconcile myself to your being disfigured to-morrow night by putting that frightful thing on your head."

"I acknowledge the inelegance of the cap," replied Alina; "and I can easily perceive that it will disfigure me. But then, in the unpractised eyes of my good old aunt, it is surpassingly beautiful. Think of the time and pains she has bestowed on it; how she has done her best to render it, as she supposes, a first-rate head-dress; poring over it till her eyes were half blind; contriving all its parts so as to make them fit in with perfect accuracy. How careful she has been to keep it clean during all its long process. Allow me to repeat, that when my dear aunt has made such exertions to give me what she considers pleasure, it is but a small sacrifice for me to wear it, rather than give pain to her."

"But," said Imogene, "it is so unlucky that she should have pitched upon so conspicuous and important a thing as a cap. The most inelegant handkerchief or scarf that she could possibly have contrived for you would not be half so disfiguring. But an ugly cap (and this is the ugliest cap that ever was made) will entirely spoil the look of your head and face. If she had only thought of working you a horrible reticule! I should not have objected to your carrying it on your arm, if she had embroidered a cabbage on one side, and an onion on the other. And then, what excuse can be made to the company, who, of course, will all be struck dumb with amazement the moment they see you with that awful thing on your head."

"No excuse is necessary," answered Alina: "the wonder, if there be any, will subside in a few moments. And I am doubtful if any of our guests will so far violate *la bienséance* as to ask improper questions, or make invidious comments upon any article of dress they may chance to see me wear."

"I am not so sure of that," pursued Imogene.

"And even if they refrain from making audible remarks," said Leonard, "you may be certain that, like the silent parrot in the fable, they will 'think the more.'"

Mrs. Rochdale now came into the room, for a few minutes, and an appeal was made to her judgment with regard to the momentous question now under discussion by the young people. Mrs. Rochdale reflected awhile, and then said, "In this instance we will leave our dear Alina to do exactly as she pleases. She will give ample thought to both sides of the subject, to-night, when she is alone; and perhaps, by to-morrow morning, she will change her present view of it."

As Mrs. Rochdale quitted the parlour, her hus-

band entered. Never did a man know or observe so little of female dress as Mr. Rochdale. It was, indeed, a theme on which he was equally incapable of either thinking or talking. Still Imogene could not forbear exhibiting to him aunt Elsey's cap, and inquiring, "Dear papa, did you ever see such a thing in your life?"

"I do not know, my dear," was his reply; "What is it?"

"You may well ask, sir," said Leonard, laughing: while Imogene and Cora joined in his risibility, and Alina and Edwin could not forbear smiling.

"It is a cap, sir," said Imogene; "a cap made for Alina by her aunt Wendover; for the purpose of wearing it at our little ball to-morrow evening. Only think!"

"Well, and why not," said Mr. Rochdale; "is there anything remarkable in it?"

"Oh! papa! papa!" exclaimed both his daughters.

"It seems to me a very good cap," said Mr. Rochdale.

"Look at this, dear father," said Imogene, displaying Madame Rubaniere's, "is not this beautiful?"

"I will take your word for it," replied Mr. Rochdale.

"I think I can make papa understand," said little Cora. "Dear father, if it was proper for gentlemen to wear ladies' caps, and if you were obliged to wear one of these two, which would you prefer?"

"I rather suppose the large one must be the most comfortable," answered Mr. Rochdale; "and the most valuable also: for in quantity of stuff it far exceeds the other."

"Oh! papa! papa!" exclaimed Imogene; "to choose a cap for being comfortable, and for its quantity of stuff!"

"You will have to give me up as incorrigibly obtuse with regard to millinery," replied Mr. Rochdale, smiling.

"Alina," said Leonard, "let my father see you in both caps. He will then perhaps be able to judge."

Alina put on the French cap.

"You look very prettily in that, my dear," said Mr. Rochdale.

She then changed it for Mrs. Wendover's.

"And you look pretty in that also," said he.

Leonard, Imogene, and Cora all reiterated their exclamations.

"But papa," explained Imogene, "one is a beautiful cap, made by Madame Rubaniere, from one of the latest French patterns; the other is an old-fashioned, tasteless, hard-laboured structure, gotten up by a good old lady that has passed nearly all her life in the country, near a hundred miles from Philadelphia."

"Which is the French cap?" asked Mr. Rochdale.

There was a renewal of exclamations; after

which Alina endeavoured to make him comprehend the difference.

"If you want my opinion," said Mr. Rochdale, "I should say that, as a patriotic young lady, you ought to prefer a cap of genuine domestic origin to one that is of foreign shape and made by the hands of a foreigner. But, setting patriotism aside, I do begin to perceive that the small thin cap is rather the best looking, and I think Alina will look better in it than if she were to wear the large thick one; which, however, would undoubtedly be found the most durable."

"Oh! papa! papa!" cried Imogene, "you are as bad as aunt Wendover herself! talking of the durability of a young lady's cap!"

"Well, well," said Mr. Rochdale, "you will never make anything of my taste in the dress line; so it is useless to consult me. I think I can generally observe when a young lady looks handsomer than usual; but I always supposed it was because she chanced to be in excellent health and spirits, or in good-humour with herself and every one else. How the cut or colour of her clothes can make any material difference I am yet to learn."

"Oh! papa! caps are not clothes."

"Head clothes they certainly are. But I leave you to settle this important business among yourselves: certain that whatever Alina may wear she cannot fail to look well in it."

He then withdrew. And Alina consigned the two caps to their respective bandboxes; proposing that (as Mrs. Rochdale had advised) all further discussion should be suspended: at least till next day.

Cora now claimed, before she went to bed, the promised fairy tale; which her brother Edwin kindly set himself to recounting in all its minutiae; much of which, to increase the little girl's amusement, was added by himself as he proceeded.

On the following morning, while the young ladies, engaged in completing some wreaths for the lamps, were awaiting in the breakfast parlour the appearance of Mr. and Mrs. Rochdale, Leonard, who had just been at the post-office, came in with an open letter in his hand; followed by Edwin with the New York papers.

"I have joyful news in this letter," said Leonard. "Alina, do you remember Julien Sandoval?"

"I rather think—I believe I do," replied Alina, blushing and looking down, and unconsciously quitting her wreath to take up an annual that lay on the sofa table.

"If you are not quite certain," said Leonard, mischievously, "I will refresh your memory, by reminding you that Julien Sandoval is younger brother to my father's friend, Mr. Marcellin Sandoval, the French merchant; who, after making a large fortune during his residence of twenty years in Philadelphia, returned to France about three years ago, taking with him this said Julien, whose parents having died when he was a little boy, he had been sent for by Mr. Sandoval to come to America, and live with him. So Julien and I

chanced to go to school together: and though he was somewhat my senior, we became great friends. Now, when Mr. Sandoval returned to France, a very rich bachelor, he did not withdraw entirely from business, but left it in charge of his two partners. One of them, Mr. Morton, is now about to retire from the concern, and my friend Julien, who does our country the honour to entertain a fancy for it, has come over to take that gentleman's place. This letter is from Julien himself, with whom (as you may, or may not know) I have kept up a sort of irregular correspondence; and he seems very desirous of renewing personally our former friendship. He arrived at New York two days ago, and will be in Philadelphia this very afternoon. So we can have him at the ball to-night. I will meet him at the wharf, with an invitation. Alina, you say nothing. You of course have no recollection of the frequency of his visits at this house, for some months before his departure for France. You were then a very little girl, about the age that Imogene is now. You do not remember a short young man with a flat face, and a thick nose, and a broad mouth, and round gray eyes: and straw-coloured hair, harsh and unmanageable, that stood about in spikes. Upon the whole, a youth of rather unprepossessing exterior."

"No such thing!" exclaimed Alina, warmly: "Julien Sandoval was tall and graceful: with fine classical features, brilliant dark eyes, and black hair, curling beautifully."

"Your description is correct, Alina," said Edwin; "Leonard, of course, is only jesting. A handsomer face, or more elegant figure, than that of Julien Sandoval, exists not in my remembrance."

And having made this generous avowal, Edwin Rochdale turned to the window, and sighed inaudibly.

"Ah!" said Leonard; "I thought I should revive Alina's recollection of Julien Sandoval, as soon as I began to disparage his beauty. Well, well, my friend Julien was very kind to take me into favour, and admit me into his intimacy, notwithstanding his superiority in point of age, and in all other things. When he was a boy, he began to come to the house on pretext of seeing *me*, and when he was a man he continued to come without any pretext at all. To me he generally talked of Buonsparte; but he had much edifying conversation with Alina about books and pictures, occasionally relieved with dissertations on music and dancing, and plays and circus-riding. I am not sure that they did not sometimes hold dialogues concerning legerdemain and puppet shows; for our friend Julien was *au fait* of everything. I should not wonder if he has a capital taste in millinery."

"But what is the purport of his letter?" inquired Edwin.

"Oh! merely to announce his arrival, and to prepare us for the happiness of having him again a resident in Philadelphia; and to say that he intends to consider America as his home, and to be

use a naturalized citizen; and to inquire if all the family are well; and to hint his conjecture that, by this time, the young ladies are quite grown up."

"There, Leonard!" exclaimed Cora; "you see other people do not consider me such a very little girl. I am sure I could not have seemed so to young Mr. Sandoval, or he would not have supposed I could be grown up already."

"Pho!" replied Leonard; "yours was not the age he thought of calculating. Alina, you need not read so steadily at the blank leaves of that annual."

"Leonard," said Edwin, in a low voice to his brother, "let us talk of something else."

"Very well," answered Leonard aloud; "I am perfectly willing to change the subject; so let us resume the argument of the two caps."

"Nothing more need be said on that topic," said Alina, smiling.

"I am glad to hear it," replied Leonard; "for, of course, since the late arrival from France, ugly head-dresses have fallen fifty per cent; and handsome ones have risen above par."

"For shame, Leonard," said Edwin softly.

"I know very well what Leonard means," observed Cora.

"Cora," said Edwin, "this will be a busy day throughout the house; and the canary birds up stairs may be forgotten. Go now, and feed them, while they are thought of. They are probably, at this very time, suffering for their breakfast."

"Poor things!" exclaimed Cora; and she bounded away to attend the birds.

"Seriously Alina," pursued Leonard: "can you still persist in your determination to disfigure yourself at the ball, out of affection for aunt Elsey? Remember, you have now an additional motive for looking your very best this evening. Reflect—Julien Sandoval is just from Paris: fresh from the head-quarters of taste and elegance: and with the practised eye of a connoisseur in costume and effect, he will at once detect whatever is amiss in your attire."

"It requires no practised eye to discover the horrors of that dreadful cap," murmured Imogene.

"Come, Alina," persisted Leonard: "let me advise you as a friend—as a brother. You know not how much may depend on the first impression at a meeting after three years absence. I know you are a frank, candid, open-hearted little girl: so I will speak plainly to you. Before he went to Europe, it was easy to perceive that Julien Sandoval was never more happy than in your society. Yes, and you were very well pleased with him, young as you then were. He has now come back to make Philadelphia his residence, and is undoubtedly desirous of renewing his acquaintance with our family. He has not deteriorated since he left us; but is really a young man *comme il y en a peu*; as I have heard from some of our friends who have known him in Paris; and as his letters, indeed, denote. In short, it may be much to your interest to appear this evening, in every respect as advanta-

geously as possible. At least to refrain from all wilful disfigurement."

Alina remained silent.

"That beautiful cap of Madame Rubaniere's in which you look so sweetly," said Imogene, "may give a decisive touch to the preference with which Julien Sandoval has so long regarded you."

"It is most probable," replied Alina, "that if such a preference really existed, it was a mere boyish fancy; and has long since faded away. I was scarcely more than a child when Julien Sandoval knew me. And he has since been living in a land of elegant women."

"True," replied Leonard; "but somehow, when Frenchmen come to America, they always seem to marry our little Americans."

"This is really a very strange conversation," said Alina. "It will be best to discontinue it."

"We are all friends, Alina," said Leonard: "friends, as well as relations; and therefore we may speak to each other without reserve. In simple truth, I believe that if you persist in wearing that ugly thing this evening, you may have cause to regret it. Julien Sandoval is well worth pleasing, and this will be his first impression of you as a young lady; for it is true enough that when he formerly knew you, it was only as a lively, rosy-cheeked, intelligent child. So I advise you, this night, to set your cap at him; and let it be the pretty one."

"Leonard," said Alina, "do not judge of every one by yourself. All young men, perhaps, are not so easily fascinated by mere externals. You know last winter you fell in love with Louisa Medwin's luxuriant ringlets. They were soon supplanted by Clarissa Harley's beautiful hands; which, in their turn, were set aside by Dorinda Denham's white neck."

"Well," replied Leonard: "all this only proves how much the power of beauty is heightened by the assistance of graceful and well-chosen dress. I am sure I should not have so much admired Louisa's ringlets, rich and glossy as they were, but that she had such a tasteful way of dispersing the most lovely flowers among them. Clarissa's delicate and beautiful little hands were set off by the exquisite lace frills that she wore at her wrists; and Dorinda Denham's white neck looked whiter still from the narrow black velvet ribbon that encircled it."

"Your own case seems to prove," remarked Alina, "that impressions made by such trifling causes, can neither be deep nor lasting."

"Come, come," replied Leonard; "it is unfair to compare Julien Sandoval with me. As yet I am a mere boy; and boys, you know, are like butterflies, always flitting from flower to flower."

"This is the first time in your life," said Imogene, "that you have acknowledged yourself a boy. As to the butterfly, we will admit the comparison to be just."

"We are all friends, it is true," said Alina, after a pause; "and now, my dear friends, let me

suggestive you to say nothing more to me on the subject of the caps. I have the day before me to reflect on it: and I now promise, in consideration for the interest you kindly feel in my appearing to advantage this evening, that I will not decide without due deliberation. You will find that though I would gladly be firm, I am not obstinate. Meanwhile, let us cease all further discussion."

She then took up her wreaths, and left the room to put them away till after breakfast. And Leonard said to Imogene: "You saw how dear Alina began to waver as soon as I told her about Julien Sandoval. I was right in conjecturing that in the corner of her little heart, she cherished a sort of quiet, half-conscious *penchant* for the young citizen."

Edwin Rochdale, who had gradually been growing paler and paler, now withdrew into the adjoining parlour, where he traversed the room with perturbed steps, till the breakfast bell summoned Mr. and Mrs. Rochdale, and all the rest of the family, to the table.

The day passed rapidly on, as is usually the case with ball-days; the gentlemen of the family keeping as little about the house as possible; conscious that on such occasions, they are considered somewhat in the light of incumbrances.

Julien Sandoval *did* arrive, and Leonard Rochdale did meet him on the wharf, and afterwards spent an hour with him at the Washington Hotel; listening with avidity to a synopsis of the present state of Paris. When Leonard came home, the family were just assembling round an early tea-table, and he informed them that his friend Julien was one of the most elegant young men he had ever seen; that one of his favourite recreations was drawing, and that he had shown him a case containing a miniature, executed by himself, of his married sister, Madame Damoville, in a plain white dress with her hair simply parted on her forehead. The case contained also a variety of costumes beautifully painted and cut out, so that they might all, in turn, be fitted round the face and shoulders of the miniature; depicting the lady in a dozen different dresses; and showing the effect of each on her air and countenance. Alina listened to

this detail so very earnestly that she forgot to drink her tea: and Edwin drank his with all his might.

As soon as tea was over, the ladies repaired to their own apartments to dress: an office that Alina always performed entirely alone: being one of those fortunate and rare young ladies that possess the capability of arranging and fastening every part of their attire with their own hands. The large and elegant parlours had been prepared with much taste for the ball; and as soon as the family had made their toilets, they went down to be ready for receiving the company. "I thought I should find Alina here before me," said Imogene: "I never knew her so long in dressing." "I dare say," said Cora, "she is all this while trying on the two caps, first one and then the other, before she can make up her mind which to wear: now that the time for deciding has actually come."

"I have now but little fear as to her choice," said Leonard. "Since morning 'a change has come o'er the spirit of her dream.'" And he walked about the room, humming the air of "Oh! 'tis love, 'tis love, 'tis love, that rules us all completely:" till Edwin silenced him by a look of reproval.

Just then the door-bell rung, and very soon a large family of guests made their appearance; being in the practice of going unusually early to parties that they might have a good view of every individual that came in after them. They were soon followed by another detachment of early people. And then came Julien Sandoval, impatient to resume his acquaintance with the house of Rochdale, and to have a little talk with them before the rooms began to fill. He was indeed a young man of most prepossessing appearance and manner; and he quite won the hearts of all the Rochdales by expressing his delight at finding himself once more in America.

Imogene, who had placed herself on a tabouret near the door of the back parlour, became quite fidgety with impatience for the entrance of Alina; and could scarcely forbear going in quest of her. Suddenly she heard the well-known step of our heroine, gliding along from the foot of the staircase. All the Rochdales, except the father, ceased talking, and looked anxiously towards the door.

(To be continued.)

Original.

A STRANGE TALE, BUT TRUE.

BY JOHN INMAN.

SEVERAL years ago a young gentleman arrived at the principal town of one of the French West India Islands. He was from Paris; a young gentleman of good person, of prepossessing manners, well informed, accomplished, and of most amiable disposition. He appeared to be in easy circumstances; brought with him letters of credit from one of the most respectable bankers in the French capital, and made no secret of his intention to purchase an estate on the island, and become a permanent resident. His name was Du Plessis.

His acquaintance with the merchants and planters rapidly extended, and he was soon a welcome guest at the houses of all the principal inhabitants; recommending himself equally to the seniors by his good sense, his extensive information and the propriety of his deportment, and to the more youthful members of society, especially the ladies, by his good looks, his polished and gentlemanly bearing, and by his lively flow of conversation. The town was small—the population of the island itself was but limited—and it may readily be inferred that in such a case, the arrival of a stranger like Du Plessis, young, handsome, agreeable and rich, was quite an acquisition.

It was not very long, however, before the stranger manifested a preference for the house of one individual in his round of visiting; and the magnet of attraction was easily enough discovered to be the daughter of his host. Louise Lemaire was not the most beautiful girl on the island, but she was pretty enough to excuse a lover for thinking her so, and good enough to make a husband think nothing about her beauty. Her father, Monsieur Lemaire, was a merchant of considerable wealth, greatly respected for his probity and his good sense. He had been more than once chosen to fill stations of public dignity; and whether in office or out of it, his friendly advice and assistance were as frequently sought for as they were readily and willingly afforded.

Time wore on, and Du Plessis was openly and avowedly the suitor of the fair and good Louise. I have said that he was universally liked, but it was to her that his estimable qualities were most fully developed, and the regard which others felt for him, in her was ripened to admiration and the highest esteem—tribute meekly paid to the purity of his principles, his kindness of heart, and the superiority of his mental endowments. She found it not difficult to return his love, and with a frankness belonging to her nature, made no scruple in acknowledging her regard and her willingness to become his wife. The consent of her father, too, had been asked and given; but with a condition which the habitual prudence of the old and experienced man of the world suggested, that their union should be deferred for a twelvemonth, in order that each party might have time and opportunity for becoming fully acquainted with the disposition and temper of the other, and that both might enter upon the married state having as little to

learn as possible of those things concerning which, even in the best assorted marriages, there must be mutual forbearance or there can be no happiness.

Some months had passed away after the engagement of Louise and Du Plessis, when the latter began to perceive a change in the manner of several of his friends—a certain appearance of constraint in their reception of him when they met, and of uneasiness when he visited their houses. He could not complain that there was any visible lack of kindness in their words or their deportment; all seemed to entertain for him as much good will as ever—there appeared to be even an increase of affection in their regard for him—yet he could not but observe that there was an air of gravity, amounting almost to sadness, in their reception of him; and that while no one manifested less esteem, there was evidently less cordiality in his welcome when he came among them. The discovery pained him much; but most of all, when he found that the contagion had extended even to his destined father-in-law, the father of his Louise.

It seemed to him, in his long and painful meditations on the subject, that the change of which I have spoken could be traced back to the arrival of a certain Monsieur Corbeau, who had been for two or three years before his own coming, a resident of the island, but who, at the time of that coming, and for some months afterward, had been absent on a voyage of business or pleasure—there was some doubt which—to other parts of the West Indies. An instinctive feeling of dislike appeared to have sprung up between Corbeau and Du Plessis, from the moment of their first meeting. The former was also a Frenchman; about thirty years of age, of gentlemanly appearance, and rather handsome features, but his countenance wore, habitually, an expression, which excited vague distrust, and this was heightened, at times, when something occurred to excite sudden anger, to an aspect of absolute ferocity. He had done no evil, as far as any body knew, since his residence on the island; his conduct in all things, had been reasonably upright and honorable; yet there was a general impression that evil passions had their dwelling beneath his fair exterior, and though nobody could charge him with doing wrong, all suspected him of lacking principle to keep him in the right. He passed current in society, but the footing on which he was established there was not secure. He had companions, but not friends; was received every where as a guest, but no where as an intimate.

The exact nature of his occupation, or his means of living, was not known. In his dress and appointments he had the appearance, if not of wealth, at least of competence—whence or how obtained, none could tell, nor indeed had any thought of inquiring. His absence from the island were frequent, but where he went, and for what purpose, he had not chosen to declare, and there was no one who had a right to ask an account of his proceedings, whatever curiosity might be felt upon the subject, was confined to the breasts of those who felt it. It had been thought that the house of Monsieur Lemaire, and the society of Louise, were honor-

with his preference, but if this was the case, he had not yet made any avowal of his sentiments. Such was the person whose presence Du Plessis could not help identifying, in point of time, with the change of manner which caused him so much pain, and to whose agency something seemed to whisper him that change must be ascribed.

It has been said that an instinctive feeling of dislike appeared to have existed, from the first, between Corbeau and Du Plessis; its manifestation, by the former, was open and decided. Whether it was that he really cherished designs upon the affection of Louise, or was only inspired by jealousy of the high regard in which Du Plessis was evidently held by the community—whatever the cause might be, it was apparent from the very first occasion of their meeting in society, that Corbeau was the enemy of Du Plessis; and if the active feeling of hostility was not reciprocated by the latter, at least, there was no appearance of a disposition, on his part, to make Corbeau his friend. They met often; but it was observed, that after the introduction, neither of them addressed the other when in general society, and that neither ever joined a group in conversation, of which the other formed a part. Yet there had never been any more decided exhibition of animosity—never any overt act of hostile character.

Thus matters had gone on for some months after the return of Corbeau, when, as has already been remarked, the discovery was forced upon Du Plessis that something had occurred to lessen the cordiality that had existed between him and his friends; it was, perhaps, unavoidable to ascribe this something to the agency of the only man whom he could not look upon as a friend. Yet he was sorely perplexed in deciding how to act upon the occasion. It would not do, upon mere suspicion, to charge the man with secret acts of enmity; and, as yet, there was nothing sufficiently explicit in the deportment or conduct of Lemaire, or of any other, to justify a request for explanation. But a time soon arrived when his embarrassment was to cease; and it was to the frankness of Lemaire that he was indebted for the elucidation he desired.

He was sitting in melancholy mood, one morning, in the breakfast room of a house which he had taken and furnished, in anticipation of his marriage, when he received a message from his intended father-in-law, desiring to see him. He went immediately, and on being shown into the library, where the old gentleman was sitting alone, was addressed in substance as follows:—

"Du Plessis, my young friend, it is a painful communication I have to make to you. I need not tell you, but I take pleasure in repeating it, that your amiable character and exemplary conduct, since you came among us, have won for you the warmest esteem of our whole community. Prepossessed in your favor by your appearance and manner, the test of intimacy alone was wanting to make us all your friends; and it was as satisfying to us, as it must have been to you, to find that to know you more, was also to like you better. We have all contemplated with satisfaction the purpose you had announced, of remaining among us perma-

nently; no change has taken place in our regard for you; you have done nothing to diminish, in the slightest, our esteem; yet it becomes my painful duty to inform you that I—that we all—now wish you to leave us; and for ever."

Du Plessis started, but he made no reply. Lemaire continued: "If the information we have received concerning you is true, as I presume it is, you can be at no loss to understand our reasons for thus wishing. You know that the inhabitants of this island are chiefly the immediate descendants of French gentlemen—gentlemen of the *ancien regime*—that many of us trace our parentage to the *noblesse*; and that we cherish with a tenacity which we are too old to lay aside, those high feelings of respect for birth and purity of lineage which, I am told, have, in a great measure, ceased to prevail even in the land from which we drew our origin. I know that in some respects those feelings are carried to an extent entitling them to the name of prejudices; but they have grown with our growth, and though our reason may stigmatize them as weakness, we have not strength of mind enough to overcome it."

Lemaire paused in evident embarrassment, from which he was at once relieved by his afflicted auditor. "I know what you would say," interrupted Du Plessis; "it has come to your knowledge that I am the unhappy son of a good but stigmatized parent; of one with whose name and profession are linked emotions of dislike—of horror. I cannot blame you for the feelings with which you must look upon me. I feel even that I ought to implore your forgiveness for having come among you under the shelter of a concealment which I fondly hoped would never be withdrawn. That hope has been deceived, and I submit in silence to the just punishment of my deception, if, indeed, it deserves so harsh a name. I will leave your island to-morrow, grateful for the many kindnesses its inhabitants have bestowed upon the son of the chief executioner of Paris."

"Not so fast, not so fast," replied the senior; "there is no occasion for so much haste. It is true that your unfortunate parentage has been made known to us; and equally true, that as a consequence of that knowledge, we have concluded, after much deliberation, and I assure you, with very great reluctance, that for your own sake, as well as our's, it will be better for you to leave us. We have tried to overcome our prejudices, but in vain; and we feel that with a strong personal regard and esteem for you, and a just appreciation of your merits, we cannot continue to associate with you on those terms of intimacy which, nevertheless, it would be more painful to exchange for cold civility, than to lose you altogether. But we do not mean to part with you so hastily; nor can we suffer you to leave us without giving you a public and distinguished token of our respect—permit me to add a stronger term—our affection."

"You are very kind—very kind," the young man murmured in reply, struggling to repress his emotions. "Dispose of me as you please. The goodness you have showered upon me, leaves me neither right nor inclined

tion to dispute your wishes. But"—and he hesitated—"one word more—your daughter?"

Lemaire, in turn, was embarrassed; and a troubled expression rested upon his features. But it soon passed away. "She knows all," he said—"our purpose and its cause."

"And of that purpose, she, no doubt, approves," answered Du Plessis, with a tone in which bitterness was slightly mingled with deep sorrow.

"I know not," replied Lemaire. "She offered no opinion, nor did I ask it from her. She wishes to see you;" and thus saying, he abruptly left the apartment.

A faint hope gleamed for a moment in the bosom of Du Plessis, but it was only for a moment. He trembled, and that sinking of the heart came over him which is always caused by the anticipation of what we dread. Louise entered, but he could not rise to meet her—he could scarcely even raise his eyes.

She advanced and stood before him. "Adrian!" she said. He started to his feet and gazed earnestly upon her face. The tone of her voice—her manner of addressing him by his baptismal name, awakened a hope which thrilled his very heart, but which he dared not cherish.

"Adrian," she repeated. And as she spoke, her hand was offered to his clasp, and her eyes were fixed earnestly, confidingly, lovingly upon his.

"Can it be possible?" exclaimed her lover; "does not hope delude me? May I dare to trust the fond presage of my heart? Oh, speak to me, Louise, my own Louise, and confirm—but no, it cannot be. It was madness to entertain the thought."

"It can be, Adrian, and it is. If your hope points to the fidelity of my affection—of that affection which, though not won unsought, was freely given, and having been avowed, has become your right—if that be the aim of your hope, Adrian, know that it does not deceive you. The prejudices that weigh so strongly with my father and his friends, with me have no existence. Yours I promised to be, and that promise I am willing to redeem."

"Dearest, dearest Louise," exclaimed Du Plessis. "How can I repay you for this generosity? But your father, my beloved—"

"I know that in clinging to you, Adrian, I must leave my father. But when I promised to be your wife, I contemplated the natural destiny of woman—to leave father and mother, and make husband all in all."

"And can I ask you to meet that destiny, Louise, under circumstances such as mine? Ought I to take you from your father's arms—from the home of your childhood, and the friends among whom you have grown up, to share my exile—to bear my dishonored name?"

"Your exile will be none to me," replied the maiden; "your country shall be my country, your presence my home. And if dishonor attaches to your name in the estimation of those who judge by prejudice, and not by reason, no portion of that dishonor belongs to you. There are lands in which the name has never been heard, or in which, even if known, the wearer of it will be judged of by his own deeds, not by those of his

progenitors. In such a land there is a home of peace and happiness for you, Adrian, and to that home I will go with you as your wife."

"Dearest, noblest Louise," exclaimed Du Plessis, as he pressed her to his bosom, "this, indeed, is woman's love and woman's faith. Such a home we will seek, my own Louise, and there it shall be the study of my life to prove the gratitude I feel, and by making you happy, reward you for the sacrifices you now make for me. But, dearest, will your father consent? Struggling, as he is, even now, between his regard for me, and the horrors that are associated with my name in his mind, will he not hate me, will he not curse me, when I ask him, for my sake, to give up his daughter? Will he not spurn me from his door, and command you to renounce me?"

"It will be a shock to my father, Adrian, as you and I can well believe. But he knows me from my childhood; he knows that my conduct is governed by principle; he has confidence both in the rectitude of my judgment and the purity of my intentions. His disappointment and sorrow will soon give way to a desire for my happiness, and conviction that in the way in which I seek it, that happiness most surely will be found. And I have confidence, too, in my father; in the goodness of his heart, his justice and his strength of mind. These will lead him not only to yield, but to approve of my determination."

"God grant it may be so, Louise," answered Du Plessis; "that the joy of calling you mine own may not be alloyed or tarnished by the thought that it was purchased at the cost of your father's peace of mind."

The judgment of Louise, respecting her father, was correct. He remonstrated, he even wept when her determination was announced to him; but, in truth, it was not wholly unexpected, and when he became convinced that it was no hasty result of impulse, but the calm, deliberate resolve of a strong mind, influenced at once by ardent affection and high principle, he gave his sanction to the measure with even more of cordiality than his daughter or her lover had dared to hope. "Thou hast been a good child to me, Louise," he said, "and done every thing a child could do, to make her father happy. It is but right that thou shouldst look now for thine own happiness, and in thine own chosen way. I give her to you, Du Plessis," he continued, "believing that you will be to her all that her father has been, all that a husband should be. Seek you out a home where no memory of the past shall come to give you pain. It may be that I will join you there; but should we never meet again, take the fondest, warmest blessings of a father, whom his child has never given, even for a single moment, any other emotion than those of happiness and pride."

The old man stipulated only for two conditions—that the marriage should not be solemnized until the day appointed for the departure of Du Plessis; and that in the meantime, the knowledge that it was to be, should be confined to themselves and him. He asked these avowedly, as a concession to the ancient prejudice, which he could not shake off, even while condemning

it; and Louise and Du Plessis were but too happy in yielding points so very immaterial to them, in grateful recognition of the mighty sacrifice to which he had so cheerfully and generously submitted, in his love for them, and his desire to promote their felicity.

Nothing now remained but the "public and distinguished token of respect" for Du Plessis, of which Lemaire had spoken. This, the more elderly and respectable of the citizens determined, after consultation and deliberation, to offer in the form of a dinner; as being at once the most convenient for all to join in, and the most acceptable to Du Plessis. The arrangements were accordingly made, the day appointed, the invitation given, and gratefully accepted.

The largest room of the principal hotel was the designated place; and here, toward the close of a fine day in September, were assembled the *élite* of the town—the oldest, the wealthiest and the most esteemed of its inhabitants. Lemaire, of course, was among them; and Corbeau, too, was there, although scarcely expected, so general was the impression that no great good will existed between him and Du Plessis. His presence was accounted for, in the minds of some, by the suspicion that he found, even in this public testimonial of respect for the young Frenchman, an occasion for triumph, connected, as it was, with what might be considered an expulsion from the island; while others conjectured, perhaps more shrewdly, that he was willing to conceal his joy by taking part in the general expression of regard and esteem for the young man, at once so strongly loathed and loved. Be that as it may, Corbeau was there; and it so happened that he was seated at the table directly opposite Du Plessis.

The feast began—was ended; and immediately after the removal of the cloth, an aged merchant who had twice officiated as Mayor, rose, and with a brief address, reciting the occasion of the meeting, and abounding with warm expressions of more than compliment, proposed the health of the respected guest. It was cordially welcomed by all present; and when the plaudits were at length succeeded by a return of silence, Du Plessis rose to make his acknowledgments.

His voice trembled as he began—the agitation of his feelings left him scarcely the power of coherent thought or intelligible utterance. But as he grew more calm, his mingled emotions of gratitude and sorrow, of pleasure in the occasion, and of mortification at its cause, of regret for the approaching separation, and of bright but secret anticipation connected with the thought of his Louise, were poured forth with an eloquence, a sincerity and fervor, that brought tears to many eyes, long unused to weeping.

His speech was brought to its conclusion—his thanks, warm, heart-felt, most sincere, were given to the friends by whom he was surrounded—his farewell was uttered, and he had already turned to leave the room, when his eye fell upon Corbeau. There was an expression in the look of that personage, which struck like lightning on the memory of Du Plessis. The glance which each cast upon the other, was a glance of recognition. For a single instant Du Plessis gazed upon the face of his enemy—for such he *knew* him now to be—then turning

to the gentleman who had addressed him, he said, in a low, expressive tone—

"There is yet one thing more which I have a right to claim. Among all these kind and generous friends, there is one who, for some cause, hates me; one whom I have never injured, but who would spare no pains to injure me. He has already inflicted upon me the most cruel injury within his power, by disclosing that unhappy secret which, though no fault of mine, has deprived me of the happiness I so long enjoyed in your society, and now drives me, an exile, from among friends so honored and so dear. I have a right to know who it is that has done me this unprovoked and grievous wrong; but I need not ask, for he sits there before me."

Du Plessis had said truly that he need not ask; for the eyes of all were fastened upon Corbeau, and the confusion of guilt was legible upon his face.

"I seek no farther," continued Du Plessis. "The assassin of my happiness is revealed; and he shall not go unpunished. He employed his knowledge of my lineage and person, to work me injury; my knowledge of him shall be employed for a nobler purpose, but not less to his dismay. He has made me known to you as the son of an executioner; I make him known to you as a thief, a convicted felon, a branded fugitive from the galleys. Seize him, and lay bare his shoulder; the evidence is there."

Corbeau started up and drew his sword, wild with rage and terror. But willing hands were upon him in an instant—the coat was stripped from his back, the sleeve of his shirt rolled up, and there indeed was the ineffaceable token of his infamy and crime. Before another sun had set, he was driven with execrations from the island.

Du Plessis and Louise soon took their departure for the United States, whither they were not long after followed by Lemaire. What became of them, I never heard, but it is reasonable to presume that their lives were as happy as worth and mutual love could make them.

DISTINGUISHED STRANGERS.

A VERMONT SKETCH.

BY GERTRUDE GARLAND.

"I THOUGHT I would just come in and tell you the news! Mrs. Branch," said the good-natured Mrs. Thomas, the buxom landlady of "The Lion," as she entered the apartment of one of her boarders—her cheeks glowing like the embers, from which, ten minutes before, she had taken the smoking beef-steak—her eyes brighter than her own radiant britania coffee-pot, and her tongue ready to be as social as the chatty sausages she had been preparing for the table, "I thought I would just drop in and tell you the news!"

"News! news! Mrs. Thomas, indeed, and what is it?" was the quick response of her friend. Now news was a great treat to Mrs. Branch, in common with all the inhabitants of Laurelville. Enclosed on all sides by the Green Mountains—hill rising above hill, with their gently rounded top or rock-capped head, some highly cultivated to their very summit, and others beautiful with wooded sides, and gushing springs, which glancing and dancing in the sunbeams, as they passed over their pebbly beds, gave richness and fertility to their borders, and vied with the songsters of the forest in the sweetness of their music, and adorned with a coronet of brilliants, each spray and bending leaf their waters refreshed—this little town lay almost hidden from the world, and buried in its solitude. The stage-coach passed through it twice a week, its ingress and egress announced by the vigorous and rapid repetition of the first ten notes of "Auld Lang Syne," in as loud and harmonious tones as an excellent tin trumpet could produce, in conjunction with strong lungs, good wind, and a willing mind. It was seldom the conveyance of a passenger who was to remain, but always brought a huge leathern bag, containing a few newspapers, and sometimes a letter—always made wonderfully secure with its cumbersome lock and chains. The arrival of this stage and mail was the event of every day on which it occurred, for this, and an occasional journey of some of its inhabitants, were all their means of communication with the great world. Yet here lived a community of several hundred men, women and children—who possessed the means of living among themselves—and rejoiced in their inherited fields, and while they labored gave thanks for their freedom and their liberty. A district school for children, who under the guidance of Miss Prim, shot their first ideas—and an Academy, the preceptorship of which had descended from Deacon Jones to his son, each in their turn made pedagogue by their own wants, and the sovereign will of the people, were the means of giving them a good substantial education, and a taste for reading. This taste was satisfied, but not satiated by a travelling

circulating library—the privileges of which were shared equally with all the neighboring villages. It consisted of a huge vehicle, painted bright red, with yellow adornments—a door behind, and a comical shaped sky-light on its top—and might, at first sight, have been mistaken for the pleasure carriage of some mighty beast of the forest, who tired of

"Treading his native wilds and filling vast solitudes with awe!"

had commenced the grand tour of the world, bought his carriage, hired his guide, and was now leisurely taking note of men and manners; much did "the library" resemble the fancy coaches generally appropriated to the accommodation of their visitors. Two little white horses that evidently had ribs, and were as pale and intellectual looking as the poets of our days—were kept in motion by a long, lank, bony man, with an immense whip, which he used sparingly and with gentleness, preferring to incite them to fresh zeal and energy by continual "*haws* and *gees*," and drawings up of his stiff, unshaven lips to an unsightly and laughable pucker, and smacking out, what if it had touched a fair damsel's rosy cheek, would have been a tremendously sonorous kiss. The internal arrangement of this establishment consisted of queer little dark cup-boards and crannies, for the bestowal of novels, romances, and the nicer sort of books, of alcoves and arches for the substantialities of literature, and of shelves and sliding panels for magazines and periodicals, all systematically arranged on the "*multum in parvo*" principle. To the treasures there concealed each family in Laurelville could have access, and before it had completed its monthly perambulations, have made themselves masters of the knowledge it dropped at their doors; then restoring that to its place with which they had become familiar, dip again into the fount and take fresh draughts from this well of knowledge. With these advantages the people of this little town were well informed, somewhat familiar with other nations and countries—intelligent and substantially educated. They knew more of daily domestic duties than of fashions—more of farming than of high life. Generally satisfied with their regular course of labor and enjoyment, with their home comforts and fire-side enjoyments; had they not yet had a modest inquisitiveness concerning, and an innate fondness for, what they knew so little of, they could hardly as Americans have claimed kindred with us. A piece of news was to them more precious than gold, though that they did not despise—it was the "*open sesame*" to all ears and hearts, and its possessor had, for the time, a talisman which made him a welcome visitor to all circles, and gave him an honored place at every fire-side. Mrs. Thomas' news was no less than that the English family had arrived, and, that until their house was ready, they

would take apartments at "the Lion." In concluding her harangue (the substance of which, we beg her pardon for giving in our own words, as being more concise) as to what Mr. Smithe said, and what Mrs. Smithe wore—as to how the Misses Smithe were quite handsome—as to how young Mr. Smithe was no better looking, nor quite so good as her Joe—as to the little girl being ten years old, or thereabouts—as to their bringing nine trunks and chests, but mostly *chests*—and as to their eating breakfast now in the "Paul and Virginia room," (a designation it took from the paper on its walls)—Mrs. Thomas started from her seat, but stopping half way between it and the door, with one arm a-kimbo, she exclaimed,

"There's that bell again. Jane must have forgotten them dough-nuts, or else the mince-pie. I do say, folks little knows what an undergment 'tis to keep tavern, says I, to Mr. Thomas last evening, says I, no it wasn't, says he to me, says he, I'm so tired that my bones ache to such a degree, says I, so do mine—and this morning I had a master kind of an aspen trembling—I couldn't get no better of it till I ate my breakfast. Them buck-wheats was nice, wasn't they, Miss Branch? I made them with patent yeast—Mr. Thomas says to me, says he, 'Lucy they be despite nice'—there's that bell again—now I must go and tell Miss Smithe to eat hearty!" Away she went "on hospitable thoughts intent." Their wishes were heard with attention, their wants cheerfully and abundantly supplied; for it was not our good land-lady's fault or virtue, to be economical in feeding herself or her boarders, and they parted mutually pleased; they with her open-handed, free-hearted bountifulness; and she with the inward feeling of "what a comfort 'tis to get up victuals for English folks, they relished them so amazing." While they were discussing their breakfast, Mrs. Thomas just slipped into the other lady-boarders rooms, and in less than an hour had no less than four able fellow laborers in her mission, their common object being to enlighten the little town of Laurelville, as to the arrival of the English family. Let me be employed in the same benevolent manner, and give all the information relative to the Smithes', which was current among the villagers at the time of their arrival.

Two weeks previous to that event, the stage had brought and left a man stout and portly-dressed in garments, not made exactly after the fashion of those worn in Laurelville, and wrapped in such a quantity of overcoats, cloaks, comforters and tippets, that who was he? was an undecided query in the minds of the bystanders. Mr. Thomas, as he took his carpet-bag into the house, gained all the information that a card attached to it could give, "I. Smithe, Birmingham, England." It was sufficient for himself and his friends, to whom it was immediately communicated for the present. The traveller entered, looked round, called for a glass of brandy,

with the usual English oath, so well known on the European continent, and the knowledge of which is so rapidly increasing in our own, drew nearer the fire, warmed his feet, and then remarked with the air and importance of one who speaks truth, that "it was a clever day." His being an Englishman, had so overpowered our worthy host that his only reply was, "well, I guess it is"—and he then threw another arm full of wood on the already heaped fire. This, with a second glass of brandy, seemed to warm the gentleman, for he proceeded to take a sock, a leggin, an over-stocking, first from one moiety of his understanding, then the other—then divesting his outer man of all superfluous clothing, he stood before them a stout, ruddy little Englishman, dressed in a blue coat and short clothes, a yellow vest, a red silk neckerchief, white long stockings, and shoes with shining buckles. The same benign influence which had exhibited itself externally, seemed to have touched the springs of intellectuality: Vermonters and Yankees, in their thirst for knowledge, and their skill in acquiring it—but these were lost upon our traveller, who was as ready to talk under the potent influence of brandy and warmth united, as those around him were to hear. He told them he was an Englishman—that they knew before—that his name was Smithe—that they knew too, only the long *i* was a novelty—that he formerly lived in Birmingham—did they know that? Ah! that tale-telling card, that he had for the last year been living in Canada, and had sent his daughters to the States to school; they had become acquainted with a widow Holladay, who owned a farm about half a mile west of Laurelville, she wished to sell it, and he had come to give it a look. He did give it a look, an approving one, and in less than three days, the fact of the Englishman having bought the Holladay farm for three thousand five hundred dollars, house and all, was generally established. He then disappeared, and the excitement of his coming was dying away, when his re-appearance, with his family, kindled up a new flame from its smouldering ashes, and sent the incense of gossip into every family.

Any new family coming into a small town is a circumstance, an event, an epoch, but an English family, real "living, live" English, with a rich old man for its head, (he must be rich, or he would have considered longer before he bought the farm; your Vermonters never change three thousand five hundred dollars for any thing, without a six months considering,) a nice elderly lady, for the elderly ladies to visit and drink tea with—with grown up daughters for the young men to flirt with—with a grown up young man for the girls to fall in love with, and a little girl for all to pet and fondle, and be the stepping-stone to an acquaintance with the others—it would have been unnatural had not the people of Laurelville congratulated themselves and each other on this accession to their society. The

bar-room of the little public house had many loungers that day; and Mrs. Thomas many calls to answer enquiries and make speculations as to all the incidents, events and circumstances, past, present and future, of the Smithe family, became both her's, and her worthy husband's business and pleasure.

But the sun did not stand still—neither did old Father Time stop in Laurelville to see the "English folks," for the days flew past with the quickened speed which an object of interest always lends to them—each morning bringing to light some circumstance in the Smithe movements, and each evening bearing full testimony that they had done something that day. If they staid at home people wondered what they could be about, and thought they must be proud to keep so private—if they sallied out, the boys stopped in their game of leap-frog on the green, made their awkward bows, and were then at liberty to staro—girls dropped their little acts of courtesies, with blushing faces, and ran home to say that they had seen the *ladies*—labor was suspended while they were in sight—the wood-choppers axe fell and was not raised again—the incessant hammering at the tinmans' ceased—the grocer did not watch the scales and catch the precise moment when the sugar balanced the weight—the merchants' clerks threw themselves into attitudes—and little cracks in window-shutters, and curtains slightly drawn, testified to female curiosity. But the week passed on, and the inquiry arose "where would the Smithe's go to meeting?" Neither their host or hostess could tell—they had not the trouble of asking, for the Englishman himself came to the bar on Saturday evening to make the proper inquiries.

He heard that the white church was Congregational—that the Baptist had a meeting in the school-house—that the Academy was used by the Methodists, and that once in a month a Catholic priest came from Canada to preach at Mrs. Burbanks, who was a Catholic.

"No Established church then, sir? another glass of your excellent brandy, Mr. Thomas."

"Well, we think the Congregational is pretty well established, sir. Mr. Lovegood has been here nigh upon twenty years," was the reply Mr. Smithe received.

"Mr. Smithe means no Episcopal Church, Mr. Thomas, no, sir! we have none as yet, but with your efficient aid, I trust, we may have one before long," chimed in the obsequious lawyer, who was standing near—he was educated at a college, and by common consent was the standard of elegance and knowledge of the village. "I shall be happy to seat yourself and family, sir," he continued, "and to have you call at my office at any time, sir," and out came a little fillagree card-case, and in less than no time was a card, with "John Brown, Esq." upon it, thrust in Mr. Smithe's face. The Englishman had not concluded his bows and other demonstrations of thankfulness, when Squire

Brown, taking the little card from his hand, bent three of the corners slightly down, and returning it, said, "my compliments to the ladies, sir, I shall be happy to wait upon them, and show them our town, and its public buildings."

"Thank you, sir, thank you," was the reply of Mr. Smithe, as he made as rapid a retreat as if that Englishman's horror, a Frenchman, had been at his heels. His departing footsteps had hardly ceased to be heard as he crossed the yellow painted floor of the entry—when a coarse, good-humored, red faced man, turning to Mr. Brown, said,

"Well, now, Squire, I spose you've done just about the completest thing—but I want to ask, what in nater you intended by spoiling your paste-board, and breaking most off them little cat-e-corner pieces?"

"Mr. Colonel Grimes—do you ask what I meant? Why, sir, in polite society, a card so bent, signifies that it is intended for more than one person. Mr. Smithe knew if you did not!"

"Now I like that, Squire," was the reply, "for it must be a great saving of your cards"—and the laugh went round at the lawyers expense, for with all his elegance, the lawyer was one of the scrimping and saving sort of men. Mr. Thomas, ever well disposed, tried to turn the conversation by asking him what buildings he would show the ladies? But Mr. Brown was sulky, and Colonel Grimes again volunteered his opinion.

"He'll show them the meeting-us, Mr. Thomas, the court-us—the school-us—the big hole old Andrus dug for gold—the grave-yard, and Jenkins big dog!" and then the laugh became so general that the discomfited man of law made his exit unobserved. It being ascertained that he was gone, his character was the next subject of discussion, and Colonel Grimes's animosity was explained, by his allusion to Mr. Brown having unmercifully cheated him, in a business transaction—an account of which he gave in full—and added to his remarks, "that Squire Brown would get bit himself some day or nuther, for every body wasn't so good-natured and forgetible as he was."

"John Brown, Esq.," went to the Congregational Church, and was greatly envied as he marched up the aisle, the next morning, with Mrs. Smithe leaning on his arm, the Misses Smithe following—Mr. Smithe and the little girl bringing her doll, still farther behind, and Mr. Smithe, Jun., in the rear. All eyes were levelled at them, all necks were stretched and heads turned. Some little delay was occasioned by Mrs. Smithe in her haste to perform the formula of devotion, so appropriately and beautifully precribed in the ritual of the Episcopal Church. She dropped on her knees so near the door that those following were obliged to wait the termination of her private supplication—a termination speedily effected by John Brown's efforts to raise her, supposing

she had fainted. This delay gave sufficient time for the whole group to be scanned, criticised and admired by the lookers on. Even worthy Mr. Lovegood was long in arranging his hymn-book and bible satisfactorily that morning. The prayers, hymns and sermon might all have been omitted, for the "English family" was a text which had sufficient division naturally arising from the subject, to engross the attention of all. We never heard of any improvement made of the subject, except that of old aunt Betty Larkin's, who thought "it was as good as a sarment on Vanity to see all them rattle-traps and fol-do-rols the English folks wore."

Before the next Sabbath they were safely fixed in their own house, and had received the welcomes of most of their townsmen and townswomen personally. Mrs. Smithe was ascertained to be a very *genteel* lady—true, she was dressed in a calico short gown and maroon colored flannel petticoat, when Mrs. Burbanks called, but it must be English full dress, for at the same time she had a velvet turban, trimmed with yellow lace upon her head—her little grey curls peeping out from its front and sides, greatly augmenting the effect of her blowsy face, and little inquisitive nose! The Miss Smithes were pronounced "lovely" by the ladies, and "slick" by the men—social, pleasant girls they were, but models of would-be fine ladies—slouching and careless in their morning attire, with soiled caps covering multitudes of little imprisoned curls—in the afternoon he-ruffled and be-curved ready for visitors. Miss Harriet, the eldest, was sentimental and poetical—she went into raptures over the wild, mountainous scenery of Vermont, and in the next breath spoke of her dear native land, and early friends. Miss Caroline was more desirous of pleasing, and if the truth must be told, had set her heart too firmly upon making a settlement in the new country to remember much of that of her birth—she was the more agreeable of the two. Young Mr. Smithe was never seen, and might more often be found in the kitchen than parlor, still more often in the stable than either. The old gentleman was jolly and friendly as any one could desire, had a word for every body, patronised all the merchants and grocers—bought all the spare stock of the farmers without asking the prices until it was his—and all their extra corn and potatoes. From the old man to the little girl, whom Miss Prim extolled as a pattern of perfection, and asserted boldly that "she was the sweetest child—English hair did curl so lovely"—the English family were the fashion. The editor of the "Laurelville Green Mountain Banner" felicitated himself and his readers in a congratulatory paragraph upon the arrival of distinguished strangers from the Motherland—the merchants had British calicoes, and cottons, and Manchester and Birmingham sheetings and shirtings upon their counters. Mr. Lovegood preached a

sermon apologetising for the coming over of the Puritans, and the American struggle for liberty. School-master Jones delivered a lecture before the "young men's and women's lyceum," on England and her prospects. The shoe-maker, Mr. Pegg, advertised "English ties and buskins for ladies." Shaver, the barber, who eked out his income by appropriating one window of his little shop on the corner to the exhibition of confectionary, tapes, and black-ball for sale, went to the expense of a sheet of paste-board to make a special sign for "English walnuts." The Harmony Band learned to play "God save the King." The "Female Education Society" was changed in name and object—and was known as "the society for the amelioration of the condition of factory children in Great Britain." The English or rather Smithe mode of dress was adopted generally. Turkeys and chickens became "pheasants," and poultry yards "preserves." *H's* went out of fashion in the right places, and were added where they did not belong—'ot 'om and heggs became a fashionable dish to speak of as it gave one an opportunity of practising the (*h*!) out. Under the Smithe dynasty, Holladay farm became Smithe Park—its stone walls and root fences were demolished—the rows of maples were cut down, and little clumps of oak and elm substituted—the straight walk to the front door was made to wind and double itself—the little pond, where the cows had been watered for years, was converted into an ornamented lake, and called by Miss Harriet "Ullstan water"—the grinning knocker, which in the Holladay times had lost its fearful expression in its lustre, was taken down, and a bell pull substituted. What the Smithes termed their "coat of h-arms" was placed over the front-door—a picture of two nondescript animals facing each other—some crooked lines and one straight one—it passed the comprehension of the inhabitants of Laurelville, nor was it made more clear by John Brown's kindly but condescending explanation that it was "a couchant and a rampant." Within doors as many alterations had been made before the spring—English carpets, English chairs and tables, an English sofa, and the wonder of the inhabitants of Laurelville, an English piano, for the Miss Smithes' were musical, wore its furniture—English prints, books, and some little china toys, were its ornaments. The beautiful month of May brought with it one more change—the hiring of a young man to preach (in the room, made vacant by the Baptists building a new church or barn,) and to read prayers with a black silk gown and white bands on—this was effected by the united exertions of Mr. Smithe and John Brown's eloquence. The attraction proved sufficient to collect a comfortably large congregation—for the girls went to see the young and handsome minister, and the young men went to see the girls.

All these changes, we repeat, had not been made in a

day, for the green leaves were on the trees, and the verdant grass was gay in its summer attire before they were completed. Laborers were plenty, and the spring planting being over, Mr. Smithe gave them an English fête—an ox was roasted, and beer and ale were briskly circulated. Popular with all classes, the glory of the Englishman was at its height. Mrs. Smithe was pronounced the most notable of house-keepers, and her butter and cheese became the country's talk—the young ladies went on their course entertaining with music and conversation all who would come and listen, and accepting all the civilities so abundantly offered them. They promptly returned their calls—they visited and made themselves agreeable, talking of London and Birmingham—they walked and talked—they rambled and chatted—they rode horse-back, with Tartan shawls pinned about their waists, and falling in long but scanty drapery, and little nine-penny *chuck* hats on their heads. Their steeds—not fiery Arabs—but good ploughing horses, with considerable ability in walking, and excellent *trotters*, but knew no other gait—were dignified by the names of Bucephalus and Mazeppa. Not a swain but fell captive to English charms—but it was John Brown's fortune to be the favored one—he, upon whose *educated* heart, rosy cheeked, bright-eyed damsels had failed to make an impression, became the accepted of Miss Caroline Smithe—and as he inwardly thought, possessor of a handsome fortune—as she expressed it “their troth was plighted.” The charming Miss ‘Arriet’s’ cart was now the besieged citadel—she sentimentalised, flirted and played with all—but upon the consummation of her sister’s felicity, smiled so sweetly upon Mr. Simpson, a widower of six months standing, with a fine family of children and a pleasant house, that it was supposed he would be the happy man. No! alas for him, for in her pitying and sympathising refusal of his offer, she more than intimated “that” her h-affections had long been placed upon a member of the royal family—it was a mutual h-attachment that though h-opposite and h-adverse circumstances had combined to separate them, she yet trusted to give her ‘and where she had bestowed her heart. The fair lady was not the less sought, after this intimation, for to be the husband of one who had been beloved by a duke, a lord, a prince, or perhaps by the king himself, was worthy of an effort.

August came, and with it a slight diminution of interest in the Smithe family. An announcement that board might be obtained there aroused Mrs. Thomas of “the Lion,” and in her angry astonishment she gave utterance to the wish, “that if the Englishmen were going to mind their business they would pay them their dues.” Colonel Grimes called for the settlement of a bill due to him, and not effecting his object, remarked that he guessed “Englishmen were just about as good now as they were when old Eithan Allen whipped

them.” As winter approached, Miss Harriet, on account of her loveliness, now that Mrs. Brown had left them, proposed opening a school for young Misses—Miss Prim immediately discovered that she liked English curls better than English manners—and intimated that she thought it would be “as well to pay for Amy’s tuition as to take away her lawful rights”—rights she had maintained so many years. Notwithstanding these beginnings of murmur, the Smithes’ had boarders, and Miss Harriet had scholars—the scholars soon left, they did not like English teaching—the boarders followed their example, they did not like English eating. Not long after this Mr. Smithe was seen about night-fall, staggering in his barn, and vainly endeavoring to feed his horses. A travelling lawyer came to Laurelville, his purpose to collect a debt due to a cabinet-maker in Troy, for *English* furniture—not being able to obtain money, he attached sufficient property to cover the debt. The homely truth that “bad news flies faster than good,” was never more fully proved than in this case. Each of Mr. Smithe’s creditors became anxious to secure their own claims—and with no lack of good feeling toward him, each came and took that which seemed right in his own eyes. Crops were sold to pay for planting them—farmers came and took away their own sheep and cows—not to trouble the Englishmen, but to pay themselves. The master of the house quarrelled with no one—and no one personally molested him—indeed he was rarely to be seen sober, and seemed passively to receive all his misfortunes, seeking relief only in stupid, drunken forgetfulness.

The year came round. Smithe Park was still there, but how shorn of its glory! Doors creaking on rusty hinges, were blown by the wind to and fro, and gave forth that hollow sound which betokens empty barns and vacant stables. The house was closed and gloomy. *The family*—their *English* glory all departed—its head might always by day be seen cowering by the kitchen fire, his elbows supporting his head by resting on his knees—and his face covered with his hands—he seemed neither to know or care that his credit, his character, his reputation were all gone—that he himself was a drunkard. What was now the prospect of that English family, who a year before had taken possession of the Holladay farm, and the good sense of the villagers? and who coming to Laurelville with little property, were first raised, more by the will of the people, than by their own pretension, to a height which made their fall, their ruin! They left their house as the spring returned—he to be carried to his grave—she to go to her English friends in compliance with the urgent request of both Mr. and Mrs. John Brown, taking little Amy with her. James Smithe took apprentice bonds with Mr. Pegg, the shoe-maker, who is now the ‘unsome Miss ‘Arriets’ ‘appy ‘usband, and has ascertained that the former lover was

an under-scellion in their Majesties royal house-hold, who, unfortunately for their union, was obliged to take a journey to one of the colonies in the South Seas, where he is still rustivating.

The little church and congregation is scattered; Bucephalus and Mazeppa have passed into Mr. Thomas' hands, and are found to answer to their former names of Tom and Bill quite as well as before their acquaintance with English society. The people of Laurelville are almost satisfied with what they have said of the Smithes', and have nearly ceased to scandalise them—and Mr. Simpson passed Mrs. Pegg the other week, bowed politely to her, and when out of hearing, sung to a lively air—

“ Sic a wife as Willie has,
I wad nae gie a button for her.”

A YOUNG WIFE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE MARRIAGE OF CONVENIENCE."

CHAPTER I.

An she shall walk in silken tire
And siller hae to spare.

Scottish Song.

"No, no, Lowndes," answered Mr. Gilmer, in reply to some question which the former had made his friend touching the accomplishments of his bride elect. "No, no: you will find Miss Vivian very different probably from what you expect. Men at my age, who know the world, know that talents and accomplishments are not the first qualities to seek in a wife. Freshness of heart and mind, *naïveté* and disinterestedness are the charms that we prize as we grow older, for they alone, springing from the heart, can insure us happiness. No, you will not find Miss Vivian accomplished to any high degree. Her extreme youth precludes that. But what music or language can equal the melody and eloquence that speak in a young voice fresh from a warm heart! Of disinterested affection, one can feel sure in a creature so young; and the pleasure of cultivating a heart and mind all your own, of feeling that every flower that springs there is of your own planting, is worth more to my taste than the utmost perfection of acquirements ready made to the hand."

Mr. Lowndes, who was also mature in the world's ways, was somewhat amused at his friend's warmth, while he smiled as he thought of the *disinterestedness* that leads sixteen to wed with forty-two, and he said,

"The lady is beautiful, no doubt. For with all your philosophic knowledge of the world, Gilmer, I doubt whether you would appreciate so highly the charms of a youthful mind were they not united to the loveliness of a youthful person."

Gilmer replied with a smile,

"I think you will find she does credit to my taste. You must let me introduce you;" and the friends having agreed to call at Mrs. Vivian's for that purpose in the evening, separated; Gilmer pitying Lowndes' forlorn state as an old bachelor, while Lowndes could not but be amused to see his friend so enthusiastic in a folly he had often ridiculed in others.

Mr. Gilmer, at forty-two, knew the world as he said; and what is more, the world knew him; and having run a gay career, to settle in a grave and polished middle age, he would now renew life, and start afresh for the goal of happiness; deeming himself, old worldling that he was, a fit match for bright sixteen, and a natural recipient for the first warm affections of that happy age.

But is time to be so cheated? Let us see.

"Look!" cried the little bride elect, "is not this beautiful," showing her mother an exquisite cadeau from her lover. "Oh, mamma," added she, clasping her little hands in an ecstasy, "how he will dress one!"

"Yes, my love," said her mother tenderly, "it is beautiful, indeed. How very attentive and kind in Mr. Gilmer to remember that passing wish of yours."

"Oh yes! and what perfect taste too he has," continued the little lady, evidently much more intent upon her present than her lover; and so she flew to her aunt to show the rich present she had just received. Miss Lawrence, a younger sister of her mother, who resided with them, had been absent when this engagement took place; and having examined and admired the jewel to the satisfaction of her niece, said,

"I am quite anxious to see this Mr. Gilmer of yours, Charlotte."

"Are you? Well, he will be here this evening, I suppose; and I dare say you will like him. He likes all those sensible, dull books that you and mamma are so fond of. He'll just suit you."

"I hope," replied her aunt, smiling, "he suits you too."

"Yes," she answered, with a little hesitation, "only he is too grave and sensible: but then he's old, you know," she added with a serious look.

"Old!" replied Miss Lawrence, "what do you call old?"

"Oh, I don't know; thirty, or forty, or fifty, I don't know exactly; but he must be quite as old as mamma, maybe older: but," added she, with more animation, "I shall have the prettiest phaeton, with the dearest little pair of black ponies you ever saw, just to drive when I shop, you know, and an elegant chariot to pay visits; and I mean to give so many parties and a fancy ball regularly every winter;" and she continued dwelling on her anticipated gaities to the utter exclusion, in all her plans, of husband or lover, to the surprise and amusement, not unmixed with anxiety, of her aunt, who soon began to perceive that her neice's young brain was dizzy with the prospect of splendors and gaities that her mother's limited income denied her, while her heart was as untouched by any deeper emotion as one might naturally have expected from her joyous, unthinking, careless age. She was dazzled by Mr. Gilmer's fortune and flattered by his attentions, for he was *distingué* in society; but *love* she deemed out

of the question with a man as old as her mother; and she was right. It *was* out of the question with a girl young enough to be his daughter; for however age may admire youth, there is nothing captivating to youth in age. His fine mind, cultivated tastes and elegant manners were lost upon one whose youth and ignorance precluded her appreciating qualities she did not comprehend; and she only looked forward to her marriage as the first act in a brilliant drama in which she was to play the principal part.

"Are you quite satisfied, sister, with this engagement of Charlotte's?" asked Miss Lawrence, with some anxiety.

"Perfectly," replied Mrs. Vivian, "more than satisfied. Mr. Gilmer's fortune and station are all I could ask. He is a man of sense and a gentleman. What more could I desire?"

"He is that, certainly," replied her sister, "but I confess I wish that the disparity of years between them was less."

"I am not sure that I do," answered Mrs. Vivian. "His age gives me a security for his character that I could not have otherwise. And the younger the wife the greater the idol generally. Charlotte has been too much of an indulged and spoiled child, if you will, to humor and support the caprices of a young man, and I had rather she were an 'old man's darling than a young man's slave.'"

"If she were compelled to either alternative," said Miss Lawrence.

"Beside," continued Mrs. Vivian, scarce hearing her sister's interruption, "his fortune is immense; and the certainty that she will always be encompassed by every luxury wealth can procure is to me an unspeakable comfort. You cannot know, Ellen, with what idolatry a mother loves an only child, nor can you, therefore, comprehend how anxiously I would guard her from every trial or privation that could beset her path in life. My income is so small that with me she must suffer many privations both as to pleasures and comforts that will now be showered upon her with a liberal hand; and I own I anticipate her marriage with as much happiness as a mother can look forward to a separation from her only child."

And now the preparations were rapidly making for the marriage, and every day brought some new finery to deck the pretty bride, who was in one continued ecstacy at every fresh importation; and when the wedding-day arrived and brought with it a *corbeille* from Mr. Gilmer, which, when opened, disclosed a bouquet of sixteen white camelias, and underneath the bridal veil of costliest lace, with other elegancies too numerous to mention, she fairly danced in her childish glee as she threw the veil over her head and flew to the mirror; and the only shadow or doubt that crossed her fair young face that day, was lest Martille, that most faithless of *coiffeurs*, should disappoint her in the evening.

The veil is at last arranged, with its orange buds and blossoms, and as the sparkling, white dress floats around her airy figure, a prettier, brighter, more graceful creature has rarely glanced across this

world than that beautiful young bride; and Mr. Gilmer as he stood beside her, high-bred, grave and middle-aged, looked better fitted to perform the part of father than of groom.

As his friend Mr. Lowndes gazed upon the flashing eyes and glowing cheeks of the young beauty, and heard the merry tones of her childish voice, and then glanced round at the small rooms and plain furniture of her mother's house, he perfectly comprehended the infatuation of his friend and the motives of his bride.

CHAPTER II.

That may gar one cry, but it canna gar me mind.

Heart of Mid Lothian.

"Well, Charlotte," said Mr. Gilmer, after they had been married about six weeks, "I suppose our wedding gaieties are nearly over?"

"Oh! I hope not," cried she, looking almost aghast at the idea. "Why they have scarcely more than begun. There would be very little use in being a bride indeed, if it were to end so soon," she continued.

"So soon!" replied her husband. "Why I should think that even you would be tired of this incessant gaiety. I fairly long for one quiet dinner and evening at home."

"I agree with you," she returned, "the dinners are bores. To be obliged to sit four or five mortal hours and talk is very dull. But the balls are delightful, and I hope may continue these three months. You don't dance, however," she added, "and I don't wonder you find it tiresome. Mamma used to complain of it too, and I dare say it is dull to you old folks who look on. But to us who waltz, you don't know how charming it is," and as she shook back her curls and looked up in his face, with such an expression of youthful delight, he was compelled to swallow with good humor the being classed with "Mamma" and the "old folks," unpleasant as it might be, in the hope that she would soon weary of this heartless gaiety, and ceasing to be a child, "put away childish things."

Finding, however, that her youth was more than a match for his patience, he soon wearied of playing the indulgent lover, and within two months after their marriage he said,

"Charlotte, after to-night we go to no more evening parties. I am thoroughly tired of them, and you have had enough for this season."

She would have remonstrated, but the decision, almost amounting to sternness with which he spoke, startled her, and she only pouted without replying. Her usual resource, to complain of her husband to her mother, was left her, and Mrs. Vivian's spirit quickly fired at seeing her darling child thwarted, and she said with the feeling more natural than judicious in a mother-in-law,

"Tell your husband, Charlotte, that if he does not wish to go, I am always ready to accompany you," and the young wife returned triumphantly to her

husband to say, "that mamma would take her to Mrs. Johnson's." Mr. Gilmer could not reasonably object to the arrangement, little as he liked it; but thus Mrs. Vivian laid the foundation of a dislike between her son-in-law and self that took root but to flourish and strengthen with time.

Mrs. Vivian calling soon after on her daughter, found her poring over a large volume most intently.

"What are you reading, Charlotte?" inquired her mother.

"Oh!" she said, tossing the book from her, "the stupidest thing you ever read. Mr. Gilmer insisted on my reading it. He wants me to 'cultivate my mind,' to read and think, but I won't think for him," she said, pettishly pushing the book from her, "he can't make me do that, do what he will. Now is it not hard," she said, appealing to her mother, "that just as I have left school, I should be surrounded by masters and forced to study? He insisted on engaging Signor F. to give me Italian lessons, as he says that time will hang heavy on my hands if I have nothing to do when he is absent. Not nearly as heavy, I can tell him, as when I have something to do I don't like. And, then, these stupid dinners he *will* give, where he has only grave, sensible old men. If I had thought I was to lead such a life as this, I would have married a young man at once;" and thus she poured out her complaints, which were "as fresh from a warm young heart," as Mr. Gilmer himself could have desired in his most enthusiastic mood. In fact, he was beginning to find that this "cultivating a wife's mind" was not the easy delightful task he had once promised himself; and the *naïveté* that had so charmed him before his marriage, annoyed him now not a little, as he saw it amuse his friends, particularly Mr. Lowndes, whose quick eye would involuntarily glance at him as his wife let forth most unconsciously some of the little *disagréments* of their *ménage*. That same *naïveté* is the most unmanageable quality in an establishment where all does not run smoothly, and for that very reason, perhaps, often more amusing to strangers. But we pity the proud reserved man who is to be tortured with the "simplicity" by which he was once captivated.

And if she was weary of the "grave sensible men" that surrounded his table, he was not less so of her young companions, who chattered and gossiped till his ears fairly ached with their nonsense.

The career of self indulgence, generally denominated a "gay life," that Mr. Gilmer had led, was not the best of preparations for an indulgent husband, and resuming, as time wore on, the selfishness that had been laid asleep or aside in the first excitement of winning his little beauty, he became more decided and less tender in his manner toward his young wife. Finding he could not make her a companion, and having no respect for her understanding, nor sympathy in her tastes, he soon began to treat her as a child, that is, as a being having no *rights*. She on her side, quicker in feeling than defining, felt as every child feels, when defrauded of their due, that she had claims to assert as well as himself; and thus commenced a struggle that each urged as far as they dared.

We say dared, for there was a cold, stern decision about him, that awed her in spite of herself; and he saw a look in her eye sometimes that told him it were best not to push matters to extremities, or he might raise a spirit, once raised not so easily laid. Mrs. Vivian seeing her beautiful child consigned to the cold selfishness rather of a step-father, than the indulgent affection of a devoted husband as she had expected, injudiciously took part in their little differences, and could not help giving her son-in-law an occasional *cut* that neither sweetened his temper nor mended his manners. He respected her understanding, and feared her penetration; and fear and respect too often engender dislike; and it was not long before a state of feeling arose between mother and son-in-law less seldom than sorrowful.

CHAPTER III.

"Nae treasures nor pleasures
Could mak us happy long;
The heart 's aye the part aye
That makes us right or wrong." *Burns.*

The birth of a daughter at length opened new feelings and hopes to the parents; and the thought "that Mr. Gilmer could no longer treat her as a child, and require her to study and read," added not a little to the happiness that flashed in Charlotte's eyes as she kissed her baby with rapture; and the quiet but deep satisfaction with which Mr. Gilmer contemplated his child, was partly founded in the expectation, "that Charlotte, in assuming the duties and feelings of a mother, would sink the giddiness of the girl in the steadiness of the woman." But little did he know in supposing that youth and nature were thus to be cheated of their privileges by the assumption of the responsibilities of maturer age. That Charlotte loved her infant with the liveliest affection, is true; but it was rather the playful fondness of a child for its plaything than the passionate love of a mother for her first born; and although she would delightedly fondle the infant for a few minutes, yet easily terrified by the cries of the little creature, drawn forth by the awkward handling of its inexperienced parent, she would quickly resign it to the soothing cares of its nurse, who, in fact, dreaded the sight of the young mother in the nursery. Once, indeed, after having been admonished and lectured by her husband on her new duties and responsibilities, she took it in her head, at the imminent risk of life and limb of her child, to wash and dress it herself, and which was most terrified and exhausted under the operation, mother or child, it would be difficult to say; and very soon she resumed her usual routine of life, only varied by occasional visits to her nursery. Mr. Gilmer, disappointed in the change he had hoped to see in her character and tastes, became more impatient and less yielding than before. Had he, in the indulgent spirit that should have accompanied his age and knowledge of the world, given way to the joyous spirits and excitable feelings natural to her youth, he would have won to himself a heart naturally warm and affectionate, at the same time that he quenched

her ardent love of pleasure in satiety. But, too selfish to put that constraint on himself, he expected at once that calm indifference to society, in a girl of scarce eighteen, that was in himself the result of twenty-five years devotion to its frivolities, and his wife's thirst for gaiety seemed to increase in proportion to the difficulties and objections he threw in the path of her enjoyment—and it was but natural that she should escape with delight, looks of grave displeasure, quick words of impatience, and selfish forgetfulness of her tastes at home, for the gaiety of brilliant throngs where she was followed, admired and flattered, and which she enjoyed the more, that the opportunities were rare and doubtful.

And thus time wore on, adding rather than diminishing the discontents of all parties. We have said before that the feelings subsisting between Mrs. Vivian and her son-in-law were any thing but kind and friendly; and they now rarely met without quick and biting sarcasms on her side, retorted by a cold and haughty disrespect on his. Age, too, was now adding its usual exactions to his natural selfishness of character, and that he might enjoy that luxurious indolence and tranquillity so necessary to his happiness, and withdraw his wife from the pleasure so apposite to his tastes, and, above all, that he might free himself from the interference and investigation of Mrs. Vivian, and separate Charlotte from her mother as much as possible, he resolved to purchase a place in the country. Regardless of the wishes of his wife, heedless of her remonstrance, the idea was no sooner conceived than executed, and however much Mrs. Gilmer disliked the removal, there was no resource but to submit. That she submitted with a good grace we cannot say, for Charlotte had now learned to *think*, (as what woman does not that makes an ill-assorted marriage?) although her mind had not expanded in the direction that her husband desired. She had become acquainted with her own claims, and in penetrating the heartlessness and hollowness of her husband's character, had learned to mourn over the sacrifice of her youth and beauty with indignation and anguish. Resenting the steady pursuance of his own plans, to the utter exclusion of all consideration for her wishes, she in her turn became careless of his comforts and negligent of her duties. Who that passed that beautiful place, with its rich lawns, noble trees and magnificent views, would have suspected the discontented tempers and unsatisfied hearts that dwelt in that embowered paradise. Her child was a source of unmingled happiness to her as it grew in beauty and intelligence. But will the love of a child alone compensate for that want of companionship and sympathy that the heart asks for in vain where there is no equality of mind or years?

The society of her mother had been her greatest source of comfort during the last few years of her existence, as she turned to her for that indulgence and love of which she felt the want more and more; and which was poured forth upon her more fully in her hour of disappointment than even in her petted childhood by her doting parent. And now how gladly did she hail every little excuse the calls of life afforded her, the procuring a servant, the necessary purchases, &c., to drive to the city and spend as many hours as possible with that dear friend. And oh, how doubly happy was she on such occasions, if she were caught in a storm, or losing the boat, was compelled to remain a few days in that small house, which with its mean furniture she had once been so anxious to escape, but which was now to her the centre of all happiness, for there she found liberty, sympathy, love; and her mother acknowledged to herself that when she had so anxiously essayed to guard her child from every sorrow and trial of life, she had attempted a task not to be achieved upon earth. Cares and sorrows are the lot of earth's children; but they fall comparatively lightly on those whose hearts are strengthened and sustained by an all-supporting and enduring love for those to whom fortune has connected their destiny.

And was Mr. Gilmer happier for the new mode of life he had adopted? No. Accustomed to the habits of a city, he was wanting in that personal activity necessary for the enjoyment of country pleasures, or keen interest in the agricultural improvement of his place. His literary pursuits, wanting the stimulus of congenial spirits, was degenerating into careless reading and sedentary habits, only diversified by light dozing; and, after spending the afternoon and evening hours in his library alone, there was a dreamy abstraction in his eye, that the keen vigilance of Mrs. Vivian having once detected, she knew immediately came neither from literary excitement nor intellectual meditation. Thus will the selfish pursuance of one's own gratification, alone, fall back upon the head of him who essays to secure all for himself in yielding nothing to others.

A wasted youth and useless manhood must end in a neglected and unhonored age.

Should a few years bring forth a young and beauteous widow, society may look for the natural results of an unnatural youth, in that saddest of anomalies, a *gay widow*. And should she essay a second "Experiment of Living," we fear that having been worldly when she should have been romantic, she will now be romantic when it would be more graceful, or at least more respectable, to be worldly, and the result will scarcely be less unfortunate and infinitely more ridiculous than the first. F. E. F.

ADVENTURES IN THE WRONG HOUSE.

BY DR. R. MONTGOMERY BIRD.

I KNOW not what extraordinary conjunction of the stars took place on the first Friday of June, 183—, nor how my own planet in particular, came to perform so many antics, in or out of its proper sphere. Before that day, I had never had an adventure in my life; the current of my existence had flowed as evenly and quietly as the stream of a mill pond; and no wit or skill of author-craft could have spun out my biography beyond the compass of a single paragraph. I was born, and I lived for twenty-five years—that is all: I lived in a village, too, and my name was (as it still is,) James J. Smith. There was nothing further in my history worthy of being mentioned; except that, at twenty-five years old, finding myself unencumbered by any near relatives, and possessed of a moderate estate, sufficient for all my reasonable wants, (and I had no unreasonable ones,) I began to weary of my rather dull and lonely existence, and cast about for means of relief. I was balancing between two great projects, one of travel, the other of matrimony; (both, indeed, in a very general way, for I was not in love with anybody, or any particular place;) when a letter from my old college-mate and correspondent, Harry Brown of Virginia, determined me in favour of the former. He was just forming a family party for a trip to Niagara; which party he invited me to join at Philadelphia, where he expected to arrive at an early day; and he promised to bring along with him a very charming unmarried cousin of his, who might perhaps, he said, assist me in trying the other project, as soon as I got tired of travelling, provided only that I had the spirit (and it required great spirit) to woo and win her: all of which I regarded as a friendly pleasantry on the part of my old chum.

I went accordingly to Philadelphia; and at Harry's suggestion, took lodgings at a fashionable boarding-house, at which he intended stopping, and where I designed awaiting him.

It was on Friday, in the afternoon, that I arrived; and having established myself in a comfortable chamber, I sallied out to see somewhat of the city, and inquire at the post-office for letters from my friend. I received two letters, one from Harry, of a somewhat mysterious quality; the other from a stranger, and of a character still more inexplicable; both of them written from Baltimore. Harry informed me that he was on the way with his party, and hoped to be in Philadelphia the following day; and he added (and this was the mysterious part of his letter,) that his aforesaid handsome cousin was about to be snatched away from me by a particular fatality; yet he did not despair, he said,

of my yet winning her, provided he should immediately find me, upon reaching Philadelphia, and find me with mettle sufficient to undertake a most formidable, but splendid adventure. "Confound his handsome cousin!" said I, "whom I never heard of before, except in his last letter; and confound his splendid adventures!" And with that, with the greatest equanimity, I banished the memory of both, to examine and wonder over the second letter from my unknown correspondent. It was as follows:—

My dear boy:—Shall be in Philadelphia Friday evening, with E., to sign, seal, kiss and squabble, according to compact: place afore-mentioned. Shall expect you—rings, posies, blushes and hysterics. Always promised your dad I would, and I will.

Yours resolutely,
T. B.

This letter was formally directed to James J. Smith, Esq. *Poste restante*, Philad'a; was manifestly written in an old man's hand; and as far as I could gather any sense from its odd and broken expressions, alluded to a marriage which was in progress, doubtless, between E. (who was she?) on the one part, and Mr. James J. Smith on the other. But who was Mr. James J. Smith? Not *myself*, certainly; who had never dreamed of marriage, except as a future contingency, and had never made serious love or proposals to any human being. No; it was apparent—and this was confirmed by the allusion to the "aforementioned place," well known of course to the person written to, but not to me,—that there was some other James J. Smith, besides myself, in the world, and in Philadelphia, for whom this letter was designed, and to whom, it was manifest from the terms of it, its loss might prove extremely inconvenient.

Under these circumstances, I perceived I had nothing to do but to return it to the post-office, that it might reach my namesake, and I was retracing my steps for that purpose, when I was interrupted by a gentleman, or a person dressed like a gentleman, but I thought there was something displeasing and sinister in his looks, who stepped up to me, and with a low bow and a grinning smile, told me "he believed he had the pleasure of addressing Mr. James J. Smith?"

"That is certainly my name," said I. "But"—
"You haven't the honour of my acquaintance!" interrupted the gentleman. "Exactly so: but I have the pleasure of producing my note of introduction."

And with that, the fellow, clapping one hand on

my shoulder, in a very impudent, familiar way, displayed under my nose, not a note of introduction, but a note of hand, for some seventeen or eighteen hundred dollars, drawn in favour of a Simon somebody, I forget who, and signed, plainly and strongly enough, *James J. Smith*.

"All this, my friend," said I, removing his hand from my shoulder, "is, doubtless, good and fair enough. The difficulty is, that it concerns some other James J. Smith, and not me: for I never wrote that note; nor, indeed, any other. You have made a mistake."

"Very facetious, sir," said the person. "I should inform you, sir, that poor Simon being in difficulty, was under the necessity of parting with that little note to me, sir; and I paid him a very fair price for it, sir, because it was a debt of honour; and a debt of honour, sir," here the rascal looked as if he meant to impress me with an awful sense of his courage and determination, "a debt of honour, sir, I never find any difficulty in collecting."

"The deuce take you and your debt of honour," said I, waxing impatient. "I tell you, sir"—But my gentleman interrupted me again.

"No occasion to swear, my dear fellow. I don't intend to trouble you *just now*. I know what brings you to town here: I know Old Rusty is coming, if he has not come already, and the rich young lady with him. The letter, sir, that you just received, sir." Here the fellow burst into a laugh at the look of amazement I put on, at finding him so familiar with the mysterious epistle; and added, somewhat contemptuously, "I did not think Mr. James J. Smith such a spooney, as to give the public the benefit of reading his letters over his shoulders in the street! In short, sir, as I said, I don't intend to trouble you just now, nor to be gammoned hereafter. I shall wait, sir, till the happy hour is over; and then, sir, humbly claim to renew acquaintance, without renewing the note, sir! till when, your obedient servant to command, sir."

With that, my gentleman bowed and stalked off, stroking his whiskers with an air of unutterable magnificence which I have never seen equalled by any but blacklegs.

This little incident, besides moving somewhat of my choler, quite changed my resolution of restoring the letter to the post-office and thereby to my namesake. It seemed now apparent that my *alter ego* was some rascally adventurer, the fellow, as well as prey, of him who bore his note of hand; and it appeared, therefore, impossible that such a fellow could pretend, in any honest way, to the hand of the "rich young lady," referred to by the note-holder, and doubtless, the fair E. of the letter. I felt that I should punish, if not defeat the schemes of a rogue, and perhaps protect a deserving girl and a deceived parent, by keeping Mr. T. B.'s letter in my pocket, and into my pocket, accordingly, I thrust it. At all events, the interception of the letter would create delay; and delay might effect the desired purpose.

I spent the remainder of the afternoon rambling about the city, viewing it, and, as I thought till the last moment, without further adventure. But just as I was hunting my way back to my boarding-house to tea, I was stopped by a sharp but rather timid-looking young fellow, a tailor's clerk, who begged my pardon, believed I was Mr. James J. Smith, reminded me that I owed a very long bill to his employers, Messrs. Snip and Shears, hinted that they had written to me two or three times on the subject, observed that times were hard, and concluded by insinuating the pleasure I would confer upon those gentlemen if I would be so good as to walk with *him*, forthwith, down to their shop, which was only seven or eight squares off.

I replied to all this, that he had mistaken his man, that I owed Messrs. Snip and Shears nothing; and upon his presuming to express some incredulity at the denial, I threatened to break his bones; upon which he became alarmed and retreated. But I observed him following me at a distance, and dogging me all the way to my boarding-house.

After tea, having no acquaintances in the city, I went to one of the theatres to pass the evening, and passed it, in the main, very pleasantly. I was, indeed, at one time annoyed by the conduct of two or three well dressed, but noisy young fellows in the next box, who, from their discourse, I soon set down as gamblers and determined rouds. One of them, who had red hair, I observed was very genteel in his appearance, but he was an abandoned desperado in his conversation: and from some remarks which he and his companions let fall, I was struck with a sudden suspicion that he was no less a personage than my worthy namesake, Mr. James J. Smith himself. Thus, in the midst of their laughing and whispering, I overheard the expressions, "Old Rusty," "the girl," "rich and confidently handsome," "hard-headed old hunks," &c.; and Mr. Redhead himself swore with an oath, "if the blood-suckers would give him but two days, he would hold up his head again with the best of them." I tried in vain to catch the young fellow's name; and soon after he had uttered the words related, another young man came into the box, and told him, "there were hawks on the wing;" upon which he looked alarmed, his companions laughed, and they all immediately left the theatre.

I could then attend to the performance without interruption; and I had been for some time absorbed in the interest of the scene, when I was suddenly aroused by a voice whispering in my ear, "I say, Mr. James J. Smith, if you please, this is no place for a gentleman of your inches. There are buzzards abroad, who'll stop all marrying and giving in marriage. And if you mean to give up *that* chance, hang me, my fine fellow, if I shan't be the first to arrest you!"

I looked around, and was enraged to perceive the note-holder, who gave me a significant nod, and immediately walked away. "How provoking," thought I, "to have all these vagabonds take me for that rascal, my namesake. Yet there

is something, after all, in his counsel. It would not be agreeable to be arrested, even by mistake; since there is no one in the city to whom I can appeal for character and identity. To-morrow Brown will be here, and then I shall be safe enough."

These thoughts determined me to leave the theatre, and go home. But I had scarcely got the distance of a square before I had the misfortune to be tapped on the shoulder by an officer, who told me he had a writ for me on the suit of Messrs. Snip and Shears; and requested me to favour him with my company to the nearest magistrate's. At the same time I perceived the tailor's clerk, who had evidently kept me in view, and pointed me out to the officer. It was in vain for me to protest I was not the man intended; Mr. Clerk said "the gentleman was very good at that story." What, I asked myself, if it should happen not to suit the convenience of Messrs. Snip and Shears to attend at the magistrate's? I felt very well assured I should be liberated as soon as *they* saw me; but they might have delegated the whole business to the clerk, who would not hesitate to swear I was James J. Smith, because I had admitted I was; and then bail would be demanded, and, for want of it, I must be immediately packed off to prison.

The thought of this degradation filled me with sudden fury; and, without taking time to reflect upon the consequences, I knocked the officer down, though he was a burly fellow, twice as big as myself, kicked the little clerk into the gutter, and immediately ran off, hoping to make my way to the boarding-house, there to lie concealed until Brown should arrive in the city.

This proved a more difficult undertaking than I expected; for there was immediately a great hue and cry raised; and, the streets being pretty full of people, (for it was not yet eleven o'clock,) I was followed and headed, and assailed on both flanks; so that it was only by tasking my activity to the utmost, and diving into every alley and by-way that offered, that I managed to avoid my pursuers. My greatest fear was of losing my way; for I knew but little of the city, and the uniformity of its streets, and the great family resemblance between all its houses, are very perplexing to a stranger. Yet I thought I was keeping the run of the streets, notwithstanding my various doublings; and by and by I was sure that a large house now in sight was my boarding-house, because it looked exactly like it, and was similarly situated near an alley which—or one the perfect fac-simile of it—I had taken notice of during the day.

As I came nigh the house I found myself cut off from the doors by some persons, who were running from the opposite direction to intercept me. I therefore plunged down the alley, which was badly lighted, and soon conducted me to another still darker one, which, I perceived, ran at the back of the houses, bounding the yards or gardens, which were merely inclosed with walls and fences, with a garden gate to each house. The

idea struck me that I might perhaps enter the boarding-house through the garden gate, which I knew must be the second one, for the house itself was the second beyond the alley. I tried the latch; it did not yield; but I had not withdrawn my hand when the gate itself was thrown open; and, upon my rushing in, it was immediately closed again, and bolted behind me; and all this, I was certain, without my having been seen from without; for none of my pursuers had got into the alley. Besides, the gate was overhung by a great tree, which darkened the alley and the whole yard; so that I could see nothing of the person who had let me in, except that it was a woman. And this she made still more manifest, by taking me round the neck, and giving me a hearty buss, exclaiming,

"Is it you, Jimmy, my dear! And how came you so late! and what is it makes all this racket and running?"

"Oh!" whispered I, in some confusion, "there has been a fight, and the police are taking up everybody."

"That's just like you, Jimmy, you goose," said my unknown darling, giving me another buss; "stopping to see every fight, though you might lose a fortune by it. But come along; don't say a single word. I'll take you up stairs. I've put out the lights. Have you got your Sunday's best on? Yes, I feel that you have. Don't say one word, or somebody will discover us."

Who was my inamorata? That was more than I could tell. But it was evident she took me for some one else, her sweetheart; and that was a character which, to avoid discovery, I felt compelled to keep up, until I had got into the house, when I designed giving her the slip, and retreating to my own chamber. But this, I found, was an achievement not to be immediately effected; for, first, she held me very lovingly round the neck in bonds; and, next, when we got into the house through the back door, it was so dark that I could recognise nothing I knew; everything was novelty and mystery. But I could hear various sounds of mirth and chatter, and especially two or three pianos and other musical instruments, echoing in different parts of the house.

In this confused state the damsel led me up to a little room at the head of the stairs on the second story, where, being, if possible, still more in the dark than ever, she gave me a new hug, and said,—

"Now, Jim, lad, I'll tell you all about it, and what you are to do, exactly. You see, she is to run away," (*she!* thought I; what *she!*) "and I with her—at least, she thinks so. We are to go off in the cars to Baltimore; they go in half an hour; and she's in a great hurry. I suppose she has a lover down there; but he can't be worth having, if he won't come after her. We are to go off in men's clothes; because we shall travel by night, and nobody will know us, or follow us. I am to wear whiskers—just such nice big whiskers as you've got, Jimmy—so as to look old and fierce,

and keep people off; and she's to be my little brother, a schoolboy. Aint it fine, Jim?"

"Oh, yes," said I, beginning to wonder and be interested at this opening of plot and conspiracy among people I did not know, and marvelling what share I was expected to play in the drama.

"I've no doubt," quoth my new acquaintance, "she would give me a heap of money; for she's rich, and she loves me; and I told her I was once rich too—for my father was before me—(which was no more than the truth) for all I'm no more now than a chambermaid."

"Oho!" thought I, "are you there, Abigail?"

"But here's my idea, Jim," she continued, with vivacity, "and it's a good one. If the young lady might give me much, how much more might the old gentleman give me—he who has got all the chinks in his own hands—when he finds the young lady is gone, lost away, as it might be, for ever, how much would he give me to restore her? Why, I reckon, a whole fortune; and so I am resolved upon it. And here's the way we are to manage it. Instead of my running off with her, you are to do it, pretending to be me; and she won't know the difference, because of the darkness, (you are to talk only in whispers,) and she will think the disguise makes such an alteration! Then, instead of taking her to the cars, you take her right home to our house; she knows no more of the town than she does of the moon; then you can pretend to be frightened and run into the house for shelter, and then it is too late for the cars, and she must wait till next night, you know; and she can sleep in my room, and there you lock her up safe till morning. Then I come and finish the business, and get the fortune; and then, Jim, we'll get married and set up for ourselves!"

Here the faithless Abigail gave me another embrace, expressive of delight and triumph; and then, charging me to remain quiet until she returned, slipped from the room, and left me shut up in darkness. I hesitated whether or not to obey her. My first inclination was, certainly, to creep out, now that the coast was clear, and find my way to my own apartment; and yet I had a fancy to follow the adventure to its end, so far, at least, as to see that the eloping lady came to no mischief. But when I began to question who this adventure could be, and to remember that, although I had seen a great many young ladies at the tea-table in the evening, none of them were particularly handsome, I confess I lost so much of my interest in the matter as to resolve to finish my share of it instanter, retire to bed, and leave the incognita to her destinies. I began to grope for the door, not without making some noise against opposing chairs and tables, when the door was suddenly opened, and I was horrified by a man's voice, murmuring, in an eager whisper,

"I say, Suke, confound it, where are you? and why don't you speak to me?"

My fears told me the new-comer could be no other than Jimmy, the loitering sweetheart and

confederate of Abigail, or Susan, as her name appeared to be. I kept as still as a mouse, intending, as soon as he should have crept by me, to slip out of the room. But fate, or Jimmy, had determined otherwise. "I say, Sukey," he murmured, "why did you bolt the gate? Why didn't you let me in? Why don't you speak? I know you're here, for I heard you. And now, you jade, I've caught you!" In fact, he *had*. But no sooner did his fingers come in contact with a whiskered cheek and a velvet coat-collar, than he uttered a dismal cry, "Oh! lord! it's a man!" and turned to retreat. But I had the advantage of him, and was nearest the door, just as the scheming Susan, perhaps alarmed at the bustle, came running into the room with a light, but at the sight of me she was so terrified that both she and her light dropped on the floor together, the latter going out in the fall; so that I had just time to notice that she was a buxom wench of eighteen or twenty, that the door was left wide open, and that the passage to which it led was the exact counterpart of that in the boarding-house on which my chamber lay; to which, therefore, I felt I could now make my way without further trouble. It was under a sudden impulse, and with the idea of punishing the treacherous chambermaid, that, as I stepped out, I closed and locked the door, for I felt the key was on the outside; and so left her and Jimmy to settle their difficulties as they might, together.

I felt along the passage for the third door, which, I had no doubt, led into my chamber. I reached it and was in the act of scratching about with my fingers for the knob, when the door was opened, and, to my unutterable confusion, I was seized upon by a young female, who, drawing me immediately in, and closing the door, said, with a whispering voice, broken by merriment, "How quick you are! All dressed already! What an immense big boy you make! Where did you get such magnificent whiskers?"

It was now that the idea first burst upon me that I had got into the *wrong house*; for I saw, at a glance, this was none of my chamber. It was a lady's boudoir, or anteroom to a sleeping apartment, from the open door of which latter apartment came a dim ray of light, by which it was obscurely illuminated. There was just light enough for me to make out objects, to discover my extraordinary blunder, to see (or part of this, perhaps, I fancied) that my new friend, who received me so warmly and familiarly, was a young lady irresistibly charming and beautiful, (oh! what a voice she had! and the touch of her hand set me beside myself,) while her expressions made it apparent that she was no less a person than the fair incognita, Susan's employer, and that she had mistaken me for Susan dressed in man's apparel.

"Where did you get such magnificent whiskers?" she cried, and she actually pulled them with her fingers, in pure admiration. "I never could have believed, she continued, laughing, "you could be so changed by clothes; that you would make such

a beautiful young man! I declare I feel as if I wanted you to make love to me!"

There was no resisting such an appeal as that. I immediately clasped her in my arms, and ravished a kiss from her lips, by which she was thrown into almost convulsions of laughter.

"Out, you hussy!" she cried; "men are not so impudent. Bless me, don't be so ridiculous. There now, that's enough. But I wish I might light upon some such handsome young fellow for a sweetheart. I wonder how I shall look in *my* boy's clothes! But come along and help me, for I shall never get the queer things on without assistance."

And here the beautiful creature made as if she would have pulled me along into the chamber; at which, in great terror, I dropped on my knees, and, seizing upon her hand, exclaimed,

"Forgive me, dear madam. I have deceived you; or, rather, you have deceived yourself. I am not Susan, I am——"

At the first tone of my voice, for I had not spoken before, she turned wildly upon me. We were nearer the door of the chamber, and the light shone upon my face as I knelt. I never saw such a change from radiant mirthfulness to the extremity of misery. I saw she was going to shriek, and I sprang up and placed my hand over her mouth.

"For heaven's sake, madam," I cried, "do not ruin me, and perhaps yourself. I will not insult you. I am a gentleman, the victim of a most extraordinary blunder, which has caused this intrusion, and made me an unexpected confidant in your intended elopement. Pray, madam, don't faint." Certainly she looked so much like it that I was obliged to support her, and she was compelled to suffer me. "I will make every reparation; I will retire. Nay, I will even assist you to fly; for Susan is faithless, (she designed to betray you,) and you need a faithful attendant."

"Sir—sir—sir," stammered the beauty, to whom these allusions to the elopement gave life, while they covered her with blushes; "I need nothing but your immediate departure. For heaven's sake go. Oh! what, *what* will become of me?" And she wrung her hands and burst into tears.

I never could stand a woman's tears; who can? And those of the beautiful stranger cut me to the soul, while they completed the fascination of my spirit. It was all over with me in a moment. I felt that I had suddenly fallen in love with her, and none the less deeply for knowing no more who she was, and what were her qualities, than if she had just stepped down from the moon; and fallen in love, too, to that pitch of desperation, the point of magnanimity. So down I dropt on my knees again, and again seized her hand, which she vainly tried to snatch from me; while I, not doubting her tears were, in part at least, owing to the interruption of the elopement and her consequent fears of losing her lover, energetically repeated my offers of assistance, declaring, on the word of a gentleman, that I would faithfully carry her to the arms of her lover, even, I added, in a rage of jealousy

and despair, "if I have to blow my own brains out the moment after."

"Sir," said she, hastily, "I have no lover; I was not going to run away to a lover."

"Heaven be praised!" cried I, "for now you can run away *with* one! Madam, I am a gentleman, and man of fortune, single, unengaged, and I love and adore you. My name is James J. Smith—" Here she jerked away her hand, but I jumped up and caught it again; for, though she started from me, it was not a start of displeasure. On the contrary, she blushed, and trembled, and looked pleased—I was sure she did—and she grew more pleased the more I told her how much I adored her; and when I presumed on her growing affection to throw my arm round her waist, she began to smile and giggle; in fact, I thought she was going into hysterics, which is a proof of overpowering feeling; when—oh! surprise and mortification!—she burst into a laugh, exclaiming, "Oh! it is *too* ridiculous! But pray go," she added hastily; "for if Susan should return and find you——"

"No fear of her," I cried; "for I left her safe locked in her room along with Jimmy. I took care of the traitress and her confederate."

"You did!" said the beauty, looking astonishment and inquiry. "Perhaps then," she continued hesitatingly, "as—as you won't go," (oh! what an enchanting way of telling me I might stay! No wonder I kissed her! but it *was* a wonder how well she bore it!) "As you won't go, perhaps you will tell me how you came to lock her up, and who Jimmy is, and how you got into this house, and this room; for I am very curious, and——and——"

"You have a right to know all about it. It was all a blunder, the happiest, darlingest blunder that ever was made. You must know," said I, "I thought this was my own boarding-house, Mrs. E.'s."

"No," said the beauty, sweetly, "it is Mrs. F.'s."

"I shall love Mrs. F. as long as I live! I made the mistake the more readily, because, being beset by the police for knocking down a rascally fellow, who had insulted me in the street," (I did not like to tell my charmer of the arrest, lest she should conceive some suspicion of me,) "I attempted to get home through by-ways and the garden gate. Susan let me in; she was waiting for that rascally Jimmy, her sweetheart, who was to pretend to conduct you to the cars——"

"Oh! no," said my mistress; "I never heard of Jimmy. Susan was to take me, and she was to be dressed in men's clothes—you know how I mistook you—what a great mistake I made!"

"Oh that it could be made over again!" said I, sincerely enough. And I then proceeded with the story as I have already narrated it, exposing the schemes and the punishment, such as it was, of Susan, and describing the illusion—the persuasion of its being my own chamber, in my own boarding-house—under which I had entered her boudoir.

"And now, my adored creature," said I, "if eloping is necessary, let us start forthwith, and we can be married before the cars start. 'Tis but stopping at the first parson's or magistrate's."

"But—but," murmured my mistress, with the sweetest accents, "would you really marry me—without knowing me?"

"I would, I *will*," said I, clasping her in my arms. "I take you for better or for worse, believing—for my soul tells me it—that you are an angel."

"Oh! James!" said she, meltingly, "*don't you know me?* I am Ellen, little Ellen, cousin Ellen! Didn't you get father's letter?"

Heavens! what a surprising climax to the day's adventure! Was I to get my namesake's letters, father his debts, and marry his intended wife into the bargain? No wonder the dear creature should melt so soon, to find in me her supposed cousin and destined husband. But how was it she could be so deceived? Certainly she must have known her own cousin. And what was she going to elope for? These questions, and various others, which came crowding into my brain, were, without my asking them, (for, in fact, I was for awhile speechless,) answered by the darling Ellen herself; who, with looks of the most confiding fondness, as if the matter was now quite settled, murmured—

"Aint it strange that we should come together so, and that we should love, without knowing each other? But how should we, since we have never been together since we were children? And I thought you had red hair, too! How foolish! And when I thought you were only Susan disguised, and wished I had just such a handsome looking person for a sweetheart, I said nothing but the truth; for, indeed, I loved you when I thought you were only Susan! And to think that I was going to run away from you! Oh! how unhappy I should have been if I had; and how happy I am that I did not!" And here my dear cousin (*my* cousin, indeed!) threw her arms round my neck in the sweetest way imaginable. I returned the caress, but expressed some of my astonishment by echoing her words—

"Run away from *me*, indeed! from your cousin!"

"Oh! you know, I thought you had red hair; and I never could abide red hair," said she. "And then, father—if you remember father—you know he is so odd and obstinate. And then that contract——"

"Contract!" said I, "what contract?"

"Why, with uncle John, to be sure; though it was not a contract, but only a promise; for, you know, ever since I was born, father and uncle John were determined we should be married together, for some of their wise reasons about the property. Now, cousin James," continued Ellen, with unabated affection, which was the more agreeable, because these hints of the contract, or promise, with the wise reasons about property, struck a sudden chill in my bosom, as suggesting some great obstacles that might arise to my new-

born love—"now cousin," continued the dear girl, "because I thought you had red hair, and because they were going to marry me to you whether I would or not, I hated you—it was so foolish and wicked!—but I don't hate you now. And when we started off on this jaunt to Niagara, and father told me I must be first married to you, here in Philadelphia, I hated you more than ever; and when father told me that he had written to you to meet us to-day, and that he expected you, and if you came I should perhaps marry you to-night, I could endure it no longer. And so I made a confidante of that treacherous Susan, and we were to run away together."

"And whither," quoth I, "were you going? and why in boy's clothes?"

"Oh!" replied Ellen laughing, "we were going *home*, to be sure; and the disguise was to prevent our being tracked. I thought it would be so fine to be snug and safe at home, while father was hunting for me in all sorts of places; and then, after I had managed, through friends, to get him to let me off from the contract, he would be so delighted to find I had not run away, after all; for *going home* is not eloping, is it?"

Oh! how I adored the dear, simple creature; and how I trembled with fear, lest, after all, I should lose her. Would she love me so well when she discovered I was not her cousin, the betrothed of her childhood? for it was evident that idea now gave her pleasure, however previously disagreeable. Must I continue to deceive her? Could I succeed in deceiving her father? and could I expect her of him *without* deceiving him? Might not their James J. Smith step in, and snatch the prize out of my grasp? Was I not wronging him and them by permitting myself to bear (for certainly I had not *assumed*) his character. No! My namesake was a rogue; and, by ousting him, I secured him his deserts, and the others perhaps—it could not be otherwise—their happiness. Besides, could I give up Ellen? "She, at least," thought I, "will forgive me the deceit."

"And here I am, after all, Ellen, dearest of my soul," I said, determined upon a desperate move; "and now, do you hate me?"

"No, James; it's just as father wants."

"And will you marry me?"

"Yes; if father wishes."

"And to-night?"

"If—if father insists upon it!"

"Well, my beloved, if he don't insist upon it, I do. Where is he?"

"Oh!" replied Ellen, "just over in his parlour there, nodding over the papers. He was quite angry because you were not here to receive him, and because you did not come all day."

"I did not get into town till this afternoon, and, of course, have not long been in possession of his letter."

I drew it from my pocket; and how I blessed the rascally note-holder who prevented my returning it to the post-office!

"I wonder if *he* will recollect me?" I said; and for the life of me I could not say it in any other than a trembling voice.

"Oh! no," replied Ellen; "for it is fourteen or fifteen years since he saw you, you know; and he only remembers you as a red-headed schoolboy. I am so glad your hair has changed to such a beautiful brown!"

"Let us go see him, and ask his blessing!"

"He will be so surprised!" said Ellen.

The parlour was but across the passage. Six steps brought us into the presence of my venerable uncle, of whom I did not so much as know the name. All I knew of it was the initials, T. B., as subscribed in the letter. He started up from his nap, giving me a grim look of inquiry.

"Cousin James, father," said Ellen, with a blush.

"Dear sir," said I, dashing in, "rejoiced to see you. Looking at my hair, I see; not so red as in old times, sir! Did not arrive till late this afternoon; hence my misfortune in just getting your last favour." I flung it on the table. "Am delighted with Ellen; and she, I hope, with me. Beg your fatherly blessing."

And down we popped at his feet.

The old gentleman stared at us with astonishment and delight. "Bless my heart!" he cried; "why where did you stumble on her? and how did you bring her into such a good humour?"

"Oh! sir, I have been sitting with her this half hour, in her boudoir, and——"

"Ah! you dog, I like your spirit; daughter first and dad afterwards!"

"And, sir," continued I, "she finds my hair is not quite so red as she thought it was."

"Bravo, lad! and she'll have you?"

"This very night, sir, if you insist upon it, as I hope you will."

"*Io triumphe!* I do—I will. Do you hear me, Nell? I insist upon your marrying him immediately."

"Yes, sir," said Ellen.

"Ring the bell for a parson. How we shall nick that rascally Harry! Was trying to stop the match; had some villanous plan of his own; and was quite afraid of him; abused you like a pick-pocket. Shall chouse him handsomely. Oh! a parson! a parson! a kingdom for a parson!"

And my venerable father-in-law skipped across the floor, rung the bell, squeezed my hand, kissed his daughter, rang the bell again, and performed various other feats, which were, in their effects, of a truly legerdemain character; for, within ten minutes, as if by a trick of magic, I, who, thirty minutes before, was a heart-free bachelor, free of the world and woman, was standing in a wedding group, composed of persons, all of them entire strangers, my bride, my father-in-law, the clergyman, with his book, the lady of the house, and some other persons, admitted as witnesses to the ceremony, about to be married to a lady whose name I did not actually yet know! The haste, the

bustle, the extraordinary transition, my hopes, my apprehensions, my ignorance, all combined to throw me into a whirl of confusion, during which the ceremony was begun, and conducted very little to my edification; for I cannot say I distinguished one word, until my ears were suddenly struck by the important question, "Do you, James J. Smith, take this woman to be your wedded wife," &c. At that moment I was struck with the enormous absurdity of taking such a leap in the dark—of marrying a woman who, for aught I could tell, might be— But, as I was going to bolt, (for, truly, that was the impulse then on me,) I caught a view of the bride's face stealing to me an upturned glance, so full of goodness, purity, affection, and heaven knows what other divine qualities, that fear changed to rapture, and I uttered the important "*yes*" with all the emphasis of resolution.

How I quickened into life now, and pricked up my ears to hear my wife's name!

"Do you, Ellen Brown——"

I felt as if struck by a forty-jar charge of electricity. The name confounded, without illuminating me. In truth, I had no time for comparing facts and making inferences; for, just as the clergyman breathed the expected name of my charmer, the door flew open, and a man rushed in, hastily exclaiming, "Hold! hold! I forbid the bans!"

Conceive the confusion of all present at this extraordinary interruption; and conceive my surprise, when, snatching Ellen into my arms, determined to maintain my right to her against all mankind, but particularly against James J. Smith, the *genuine*, who, I doubted not, was the cause of the interruption—conceive my surprise, I say, when, turning to this detested personage, my eyes fell, not upon my red-headed namesake, but my old friend and college-mate, Harry Brown, of Virginia! That he should be here! that he should cause such a dangerous interruption! that he should turn against me, his old friend, and ruin me! I gnashed my teeth at him; I raised my hand in a furious menace; and, if there had been a pistol in it, I certainly should have blown his brains out.

"You forbid the bans, you scoundrel!" said my father-in-law, in a rage equal to my own; "*you*, you dog, you! *you* forbid the bans!"

He was approaching my friend irefully. But Harry was looking at me. His face lighted up with wonder, followed by an air of recognition and delight; and, smothering, or trying to smother, a laugh, and laying his finger significantly along his nose, as he looked at me, he repeated, though in very altered accents—in fact, he could scarce speak for laughing—

"Yes, I forbid the bans—until Mrs. Brown gets up! She is on the stairs. What, uncle, do you expect to marry Nell off, without allowing us to be witnesses. Here she is." Enter Mrs. Harry Brown, a fine-looking young matron, but not so sly as my Nelly. "You thought to give us the slip, by taking the morning boat, and changing

your boarding-house. You forgot the evening train, and my skill in hunting down fugitives!"

"And you don't oppose the match then, you dog?" cried my father-in-law, "and you don't know anything against cousin Jim, after all?"

"Oh, no; nothing at all! I approve of the match with all my heart and soul; and pray proceed with it as quickly as possible. You, Ellen Brown, do take this man— But I beg the reverend gentleman's pardon."

The ceremony was resumed, and in two minutes I was married.

"Victoria!" cried Harry Brown, seizing my hand, and so interrupting the first nuptial embrace, with which, according to the fashion, I was saluting my wife. "I congratulate you, cousin James J. Smith, upon having married the finest girl and richest heiress in Virginia; the very girl I intended for you! Oh! you dog, who could have thought you had the wit and spirit to accomplish the 'splendid adventure' without my assistance? Know your relations! Don't you see, my wife wants to kiss her unknown cousin? You kiss *her*, and I'll kiss Nelly! Ha! ha! ha!"

And here my friend went into such explosions of laughter and rejoicing as amazed everybody except me, who began to be aware of the full extent of my good fortune.

In the midst of this joyous tumult enter another unexpected visitor. Death! it was the red-headed gentleman of the theatre; the true James J. Smith, as my fears told me, and as was rendered still more evident by his first words to my father-in-law. "Sir," said the young gentleman, grasping him affectionately by the hand, "I have, I believe, the honour of speaking to my dear uncle, Thomas Brown, and of introducing to him his unworthy nephew, James J. Smith."

"Bless my soul!" cried the old gentleman, and could no more; for he was struck dumb with astonishment.

"Had the misfortune, in some unaccountable way," continued the new comer, "to miss your last favour, promised to arrive to-day," (and here the villain drew out some *former* letter,) "and only heard of your being here by accident. But that—I can't be mistaken! Permit me to pay my respects to my dear cousin!"

And up stepped *Alter Ego*, with captivating smile and extended hand, to my astonished wife, whom he saluted as his dear cousin Ellen—Miss Brown."

"Mrs. James J. Smith, sir," said I.

"*That is to be!*" added Red-head, with delightful suavity.

I looked round to my friend Harry for assistance; for, I confess, at this moment my heart failed me, not that I had any fear of my contemptible namesake, indeed, but I dreaded the effect of the denouement upon my wife and father-in-law, both of whom appeared very much discomposed by the new turn of affairs. Harry looked as if about going into another burst of merriment; but he

nodded his head, as if to bid me dash ahead, without fear.

"Mrs. James J. Smith *that is*, sir," said I. "This lady is my wife."

"Sir," said the gentleman, "I am James J. Smith!"

"Sir," said I, "so am I!"

"James *Jones* Smith," cried Red-head, "this lady's cousin!"

"James *John* Smith," cried I, "this lady's husband!"

"Uncle!" exclaimed James Jones, with a look of horror and despair, "you have married Ellen to an impostor! and I am ruined for ever."

"What! an impostor!" cried Mr. Brown; "call for a constable!"

"If you do," said I, "he will only arrest your nephew there, not me, as your nephew knows full well. The young man speaks the truth, at least, in part. He *is* your nephew, and he *is* ruined for ever; as I know as well as he; for, this afternoon, I was dunned upon an unpaid note of his for a debt of honour, a gambling debt, of near two thousand dollars, and was arrested, besides, for a tailor's bill of—"

"Oh! for heaven's sake!" interrupted my rival, deprecatingly.

"And," continued I, unmercifully, "it is but an hour since I heard him, in the public theatre, when warned to beware of the 'hawks and buzzards' who were on the watch for him, boast, to his gambling friends, of his 'rich and confoundedly handsome' cousin here, the daughter of 'Old Rusty,' a 'hard-headed old hunk,' as a resource that would enable him to 'hold up his head again with the best of them.'"

"Done for, by jingo!" said Mr. James Jones Smith, and sneaked out of the room.

"Oh! the abandoned villain!" quoth my father-in-law.

"And if you want more evidence of his worthiness," said Harry, stepping to my aid, "I can give it; and you know, uncle, I warned you I had heard strange tales of him. When I came round here with Mrs. Brown, to see you, and heard you were marrying away Nelly, I thought it was to him; and *that's* the reason I forbade the bans."

"Ay, sir; and you countenanced, you aided and abetted this worthy personage," said Mr. Brown, senior, giving me a look as black as midnight; "you helped, you even instigated, a rascally impostor," here the old man gave way to rage, and Ellen began to cry, "to cheat and deceive my girl, to rob me of my daughter."

"No impostor at all," said Harry. (I would have said the same thing; but he took the word out of my mouth.) "He is a gentleman, uncle my old friend and college-mate; and the very man I wished to substitute for his namesake; the very man I hinted about to you; though I never told you his name. For, in honesty, I must confess I had some thoughts, if no other turn would serve of getting him to personate your nephew, and so

cheat you into accepting a worthier son-in-law. He has rushed into the adventure on his own suggestion," (here Harry began to laugh again,) "and, I vow, I admire and love him all the better for his spirit."

"It was a villanous deception," said Mr. Brown.

"I declare, sir," said I, "it was an unpremeditated, an accidental one altogether. An extraordinary circumstance" (and here I related it) "threw me into Ellen's boudoir; where, upon mentioning my name, (and James J. Smith—James John Smith—is my name, sir,) she herself hailed me as her cousin; from whom I found her just on the point of running away."

"Oh! James," said Ellen, "don't tell on me!"

"I had never seen her before; I knew not who she was; yet I fell desperately in love with her; and, to improve the opportunity, (which I must otherwise have lost,) I allowed her to remain deceived. I did deceive you, in appearing as your nephew; for I saw that, otherwise, you would reject me. Yet you must give me credit for disinterested motives, sir, and for a true uncompromising affection for your daughter; since I stood up to marry her without knowing who she was, without knowing even so much as her name."

"Very fine, indeed," said the snarling Mr. Brown; "but as you had heard your namesake talk of the 'rich,' as well as 'devilish handsome' daughter of the 'hard-headed Old Rusty,' (confound the jackanapes!) you must permit me to believe you were reminded of her *two* recommendations together——"

"I declare," interrupted I, "I hadn't time to think of anything but her beauty."

"But, sir," continued my father-in-law, sternly, "my nephew forgot to let you, and his rascally associates know, sir, that my daughter's riches,

sir, depended upon the will of her father, sir; and that she will never get a penny, sir, for marrying a man I disapprove of, sir!"

"Then, sir," said I, "I am proud to assure you that fortune has placed me beyond the necessity of lamenting your disapproval; for, thank heaven, I have enough, and more than enough, to secure your daughter's happiness, if love and a handsome competency can secure it."

"Shall have it all!" said "Old Rusty," grasping my hand warmly; "for I was only trying you; and I see you *are* a good fellow. Confound that rascally nephew! what an escape we have had! And it is all owing to his" (this was spoken to Harry and the others) "having the same name, being a better fellow, and not having red hair!"

"And you aint my cousin, after all!" murmured the soft voice of Ellen in my car.

"No, my love; but——"

"But my husband! Oh! it is very funny. But I shall love you all the better. And I am so glad you deceived us; otherwise father might have never consented."

"And if he had not?"

"Then, perhaps—yes, then—if you had asked me—I should have run away *with* you! But now let us liberate Susan, and give her a scolding."

"Oh!" said the lady of the house, "she, or her Jimmy, has picked the lock, and they have run away together."

"Well, let her go," said Ellen, "fate has provided me a better travelling companion; and I do not care now how soon we start off to Niagara."

Ah! the dear creature! She has not yet ceased to laugh and rejoice over the oddity of our courtship and marriage; and, as for me, I never recount, without a thrill of pleasure, my half hour's Adventures in the Wrong House.

Written for the Ladies' Garland.

AGATHA LINDSAYE,

OR, VANITY.

BY MISS M. E. L., OF NEW YORK.

"How very beautiful, Aunt Agatha, you must have been if you resembled your miniature," exclaimed a bright and lovely girl, who had been intently gazing on a miniature, to a lady scarcely beyond the prime of life, with the remains of great beauty in her expressive countenance. "How I should like to have been you."

"Anna," said the lady, "that is very unwisely said; listen to me, and you shall hear why it is.—Yes, I was called beautiful; my mother, though kind and loving, loved me for my beauty, my father was proud of it, my schoolmates flattered me, and my mirror whispered their praises were true. We were surrounded with luxuries; the comforts riches could procure were ours. I was an only child, a vain and spoiled one. The only sorrow I knew from infancy to womanhood was the death of my mother; vain as I was, I loved her, and I grieved long and bitterly for her loss. But dress and the excitement of my entrance in the gay world, soon subdued my grief. I was admired, caressed, and flattered; poets dedicated their lays to me; painters begged I would honor them, by sitting to them for my portrait. I was surrounded with suitors, and though scarce eighteen, was a reigning belle. You may wonder that I never loved: no! I despised the crowd of fools too much ever to love *them*. I sometimes thought I never should, until one evening, at a very gay and large assembly, I was introduced to a Mr. Aubrey. He was very handsome, with noble features, and dark expressive eyes; but that which struck me most, was his difference from all whom I had yet seen. He took merely a passing notice of me, bowing politely, and hurrying on, yet his figure haunted me, my gay spirits forsook me, and I hastened home.

"Again and again we met, and one evening he seated himself beside me and commenced a conversation. I had heard of him long before I saw him; his praises had been rung in my ears, and when I heard the tones of his musical voice, and saw his dark eye flashing as he spoke, I resolved, if heart could be won, I would win Edward Aubrey's. He was very attentive to me during the evening, and I was satisfied. I put forth all my powers to obtain the end I desired, and I saw I had conquered.

"Did I love him? yes, I had in striving to win his heart lost my own. I loved him

deeply, truly, with all the first fervor of feeling, all the devotedness of a youthful heart.

"'Agatha,' he said to me, 'when I first saw you, I thought you vain, proud, and a coquette, but by degrees I saw how mistaken I was; I saw you scorned the flatterers who fawned upon you, and that you were worthy all the love a true heart can bestow.' I blushed at his praises, Anna, for I felt I did not deserve them, 'but,' he continued, 'can you, will you, dearest Agatha, accept a heart that loves you truly.' My answer was not nay, and we were happy. You would think, Anna, my vanity was overcome: no, it was too deep seated to be so easily rooted up. For a long time, his slightest glance could suppress my levity; but one evening, accompanied by my father, I went to a ball, Edward having promised to join us there. I was introduced to Lord Everton, a very silly conceited, coxcombical young man. I forgot for the while my prudent resolutions of never coquetting, and in the midst of a violent flirtation, happening to glance upwards, I beheld the eye of Edward fixed on me with an expression I felt but too keenly.

"He came on the morrow, and though his manner was gentle, still I felt his reproaches were true. I was too proud to acknowledge I was wrong, and he left me in anger. When he came again, I was denied to him; he wrote to me, beseeching me to see him once more at least; I was about to yield, when pride came to my assistance, and I returned his note in an envelope.

"Day after day, and even months rolled by; still he came not; I had overrated my strength, my brow grew haggard, my cheek pale, and my eye dim. My father saw it, and urged me to a change of scene. At last I consented, and we went to C——, then a fashionable watering place. We remained there a few months; I scarcely ever went into gay company, but just before our return, my father solicited my going to a large party. To please him, I consented, and wore my richest robe, with a splendid set of diamonds, a present from my father. The lighted rooms were crowded; my eyes ached, my head grew giddy, but I rallied my spirits and was gayest of the gay. A lady beside me whispered to another, 'Ah, there comes the newly married ones. Is she not handsome.' I glanced toward them, and—I was paralyzed—it was Edward Aubrey; on his arm leaned a fair young girl. My heart almost burst, I turned deadly pale, but with a strong effort commanded myself. Calmly, collectedly I returned his bow: yes, an officious simpleton introduced him and *his wife* to me. I nerved all my strength, but the

forced gaiety of my manner, and the wild expression of my eye, struck my father, and he urged me to leave. I reached the carriage, and, faint, senseless, and heart-broken, sank on the seat."

Agatha sighed deeply, as she spoke; her niece urged her not to proceed, but she continued; "long and severe was my fit of sickness; in my delirium I called upon Edward, and on my mother, begging them to take the weight of lead from my heart. My father watched unweariedly beside me. I hovered between life and death, and when I recovered I was weak as a child. Day by day, I regained my strength, my cheek its color, and I arose from my bed of sickness an altered creature. I retained my faults—my vanity; but I had overcome my passions. I had conquered my love for Aubrey. I despised myself for my former weakness. Aubrey I learned had married his cousin—a marriage which had been proposed to him by his parents before.

"My father had been uniformly kind to me, never urging my acceptance of any proposal I had hitherto received. But Lord Robert Lindsave was the son of an old friend of his; he was generous, and noble-minded, although passionate; and in face and figure, the model of manly beauty. At length I consented to his and my father's wishes, to become his bride.

"We were married; and once more I plunged in the giddy vortex of fashion. My husband was proud of the admiration I attracted; my establishment was splendid, and I gave balls, parties, and fêtes in abundance.

"A new star had arisen in the world of fashion;—Lady Deloraine was beautiful and wealthy, and we were rival leaders of the *ton*. Lord Deloraine was a weak, simple man, disliking his wife, (who had wedded not him, but his riches;) he was a constant attendant to all my parties and routs. It was to me a source of triumph, although I despised him, for I knew it vexed his wife. If she gave a ball, I determined to outshine her, and gave one still more splendid.

"My husband disliked Lord Deloraine, and remonstrated upon his intimacy with me. I laughed at him, and asked if he were jealous. The scornful tones of my voice, and the sneer which accompanied my words, aroused his anger, and we quarrelled. From that time a coldness subsisted between us. I could not give up Lord Deloraine, he was useful to me, or in other words, Anna, he flattered my vanity.

"It was about this time my father died, leaving me the whole of his large property.

I was now more than ever mistress of my own will.

"One morning I had received many visitors, among whom came Lord Deloraine. A miniature of mine (the one you hold now, Anna,) was thrown carelessly on a table, amidst books, cards, &c. Unknown to me, Deloraine carried it away.

"I was engaged that evening to a large assembly. Splendidly dressed, exulting in the consciousness that I looked unusually well, I was gayer than usual. At a late hour, I returned home; when, on entering my dressing-room, I was surprised to see Lindsay pacing up and down the room, his hair disordered, and evidently laboring under great agitation.

"'Unhappy woman,' he exclaimed, as he saw me, 'could I believe you so lost to all sense of your own honor. What a fool have I been to trust my happiness to *your* care.'

"I was startled, and said 'Robert! Lord Lindsay, what is the matter?'

"He cast on me a look of extreme contempt,—'Ay, well may you strive to disguise it. Would you conceal it from me, that you gave your miniature to Lord Deloraine, and that he spoke of you, as no man shall speak of my wife without—no matter. Oh, Agatha, could I believe this of you?' and he turned to leave the room. I sprang after him, but he eluded my grasp, and heeded not the sound of my voice.

"I threw myself, half senseless, on a couch, and sank into an uneasy and restless slumber. Horrid dreams disturbed me, and I was awakened by the sound of heavy footsteps near my room. I rose hastily, and threw a mantle around me, intending to seek Lord Lindsay.

"The sun was just rising, and the eastern clouds were tinged with gold. I opened my door, when, O! what a sight met my view—Lindsay, pale, lifeless, and stained with blood, in the arms of the servants, who were placing him on a bed in a room just opposite mine. I fainted, and when I recovered found myself in my room, with my maid, who was bathing my temples. The truth flashed on me; Lindsay had met Lord Deloraine; and, despite the girl's entreaties, I rushed to his room. He was very pale; a surgeon was bending over him, and at the foot of the bed stood Deloraine.

"'Agatha,' he said, 'can you forgive me, dearest? had I listened to you, but no, my pride and anger prevented me. Agath——' his breathing became difficult, and in a few moments he expired in my arms.

"You know the rest, Anna, that since then, I have wholly resided in this sequest-

ered village, hoping to spend the remainder of my life more to my good, and that of my fellow-creatures. And now, Anna," concluded Lady Lindsay, "would you wish to feel all the remorse that I do, and have your future life embittered by it? Ah, no! You are very lovely, Anna; may my tale prove a warning to you, never to indulge the sin of Vanity.

January, 1842.

AGNES WALTHAM.

BY ELLEN ASHTON.

"Put on your thick shoes, my love, when you go out," said Mrs. Waltham to her daughter, as the latter rose to dress for a promenade.

"Oh! mamma, they are so clumsy," was the reply of Agnes.

"But, my dear, the pavements are yet damp from yesterday's rain, and you know you are peculiarly susceptible to cold."

"But I will walk on the sunny side, and not stop a minute to talk. Indeed, indeed there is no danger. Miss Beresford, who is to call for me, always wears so neat a shoe—I should be ashamed to go with her if I had on those thick boots."

The discussion continued for some time longer, but ended, as discussions between fond mothers and pleading daughters too often do, in the surrender of the parent. Agnes tripped off to array herself for the walk, and soon departed, all radiant with smiles. She was absent until twilight.

"How fine a color you have to-night," said her doting father, "exercise has called a bloom to your cheek—ah!" he continued teasingly, "Edward ought to be here now—he would be charmed with the brilliancy of your complexion."

Agnes turned away blushing, for Edward was her affianced lover, and their marriage was to take place the ensuing spring.

In the evening Edward came, and he too remarked the high bloom in the cheek of Agnes.

"I have been taking a walk," she answered, in reply to an allusion he made to it, "and the bracing air has called an unwonted color to my cheek. You know you have often told me that we American ladies never take sufficient exercise, and that therefore, as a class, we are wan and sickly looking."

"True—but your bloom seems almost unnaturally high, and I would have attributed it to a fever were you not in such a flow of spirits. Have you not been walking out again with thin shoes?"

Agnes looked down, and said nothing.

"Dear Agnes," said her lover, after a pause, "why will you be so imprudent? You know your constitution is none of the strongest, and a slight cold, caught by such thoughtlessness as this, often ends in consumption."

"But none of our family are consumptive," quickly retorted Agnes, looking up; and laying her hand on Edward's arm, she continued smiling with bewitching sweetness, "there, now, dismiss your fears—I never felt better in my life, and as for colds, why, I have had them a thousand times."

There was a look of deep seriousness on the lover's face as he replied,

"A cold, Agnes, from its very slightness, is our most insidious enemy. If we are attacked with any serious disease—a fever, the pleurisy, an inflammation of the throat—we ask the advice of a physician at once, or at least apply those remedies which we know to be efficient in the case. The consequence is that we combat the disorder before it has become firmly seated, and, in nine cases out of ten, save our life. But with a cold we pursue a different treatment. It seems so slight a thing that we laugh at it and leave it to cure itself, nor do we awake from our delusion, although the cough, attending the cold, may continue for a month. By and bye, however, we begin to feel a pain in the breast, and our cough increases until it racks our frame by day, and deprives us of that rest which is so necessary at night. Now perhaps we begin to think there may be something serious in our cold, and we proceed at once to use severe remedies. Perhaps we are cured, and, if so, we grow ten times more careless, because we have experienced, in our case, that it is possible to neglect a cold, and yet eventually cure it. We become fool-hardy, until finally we take cold again, neglect it as we did before, and fall victims to consumption, in spite of our desperate efforts, when it is too late, to shake off our cold. How many of both sexes—the talented, the beautiful, the young—have we seen thus go down to the grave! How many a young man and blooming maiden, if asked, on their death-bed, why 'they were so early hurried to the tomb?' might answer, 'because we neglected a slight cold!' Look over the records of the Health offices of our cities, and you will find that nearly one third of the adults die of consumption—and nine-tenths of the victims to this death fall a prey to the insidious approach of a slight cold. How often have we conversed on this subject, and yet, dear Agnes, you are still imprudent."

He ceased, for the sound of sobbing met his ear, and bending over Agnes—for she had turned away her head—he saw that she was weeping. The lover was melted. He felt that he was right, but he could not resist those tears. He drew her tenderly toward him.

"Forgive me, dearest," he said soothingly, "I spoke, perhaps, too harshly; but I did not mean to hurt your feelings. Come, let us forget what has past; and I will hear you play that new march I brought you the other evening."

Alas! that the giving so needful a lesson should be a thing for which pardon should be asked.

The following morning Agnes had a slight head-ache, but it was attributed by her fond mother to what her lover had said the evening before, and to a sleepless night passed in consequence of it.

"Agnes, you have a slight cold," said her father, at the tea-table, "don't you think so?"

"Oh! no, pa," she answered gaily, "I only coughed because I foolishly ran down stairs."

"Well I hope not," was the parent's reply.

That evening Edward did not come, as he was engaged in transacting important business; but the ensuing day brought him to Mr. Waltham's parlor. He noticed that Agnes had a slight cough, but remembering the events of his last visit, he said nothing. Nor, on a second visit, when the cold still continued, did he venture to expostulate by words, though he could not restrain a look.

"You *must* do something for that cold," said her father, on the ensuing morning, "I heard you coughing violently after you retired, and, when I awoke in the night, you were still coughing. It may become a serious matter. I would advise you to remain in for a few days, and commit yourself to your mother as a nurse. These colds ought not to be trifled with."

"Oh! papa, it is nothing," replied Agnes, "and will soon cure itself. Besides it is impossible for me to stay at home—you know I am to be bridesmaid for Miss Henrikson, and she will be married to-morrow—how could you have forgotten it?"

"We often forget such things, important as they are to young ladies," answered her father, smiling, "but since you can't remain at home, you must take extraordinary care of yourself."

"Oh! that I will do—never fear. And don't alarm yourself about my cold, dear papa," said Agnes, throwing her arms about his neck, and fondly kissing him, "I declare you and Edward are enough to frighten one."

The wedding of her friend took place, and was followed by a round of parties, for the winter was unusually gay, and the friends of the married couple vied with each other in the splendor and number of their entertainments. Night after night Agnes was out until one and two o'clock at these assemblages. Her parents no longer took notice of her cold, and nothing, therefore, was said about it, but could they have heard, in the night, the efforts of their daughter to stifle a cough, lest it should awaken them, they would have been seriously alarmed. Even Edward was scarcely aware that she had a cough, so perseveringly did she check every manifestation of it in his presence. And thus two fatal months passed on.

One night she had been dancing in a crowded room, and, when she ceased, the heat was so excessive that she ran to a window for a moment's breath of air. Her partner was a thoughtless young man, who, like herself, saw no imprudence in the act, but remained talking with her, while the refreshments were handed, and until the next set was called. Unfortunately her lover was not present, having been detained by imperative business. She often sought the window during the evening, but

the consequences began to show themselves as soon as she left the room to retire. Before she reached home a violent shivering seized her, and she went to bed really ill; but, conscious of her imprudence, and hoping to feel better in the morning, she did not awake her parents.

In the morning she had a violent head-ache, attended with pain; and was forced to confess herself really ill. She was now penitent, and willing to submit to the application of any remedy.

Medicines were immediately resorted to, and apparently with success, for her fever was broken, and before long she was able to resume her ordinary duties in the house, though it was not deemed prudent, as yet, to suffer her to go out in the evenings. Edward was an anxious attendant at her side, while she remained a prisoner in the house, and nothing could exceed the delicacy with which he anticipated her every wish. He never alluded to her imprudence, but his mournful look of unavoidable reproach when he first heard of her thoughtlessness, haunted her memory, and she resolved never again to disregard his advice. But alas! the opportunity to shew her obedience to his wishes was deferred from day to day; for a violent cough had made its appearance, simultaneously with her fever, and though the latter had been broken, the former still remained. Remedy after remedy was tried, but in vain. At length the family began to be alarmed. Physicians were now called in, though secretly, lest Agnes should be frightened, and their opinions listened to with beating hearts. They recommended various remedies, which were eagerly tried; but all failed. Winter was now fast approaching, and a warmer climate was hinted at, though the physicians still said they hoped it was not a case of consumption. To Cuba accordingly Mr. and Mrs. Waltham took their only child. Edward could not accompany them, but he promised to write by every packet, and parted from them with a heavy heart.

The winter months dragged slowly away, during which Edward received weekly letters from Cuba, sometimes holding out hope and sometimes breathing almost despair. His spirits began to fall. Spring was now at hand—that spring in which he and Agnes were to have been married—and gloomy forebodings took possession of his heart. One evening he suddenly received a message that the Walthams had returned and wished to see him. With a trembling heart he hastened to their dwelling, and rushed, mad with fears, into Agnes' sick room, almost without being announced. Oh! the sight that met his eyes. Pale, and worn to a skeleton, yet with the lustrous eye and crimson cheek of the consumption, Agnes Waltham met the eye of her lover, who had parted with her, when she wore at least the appearance of health. The change was too much for him, he staggered to a chair, and for some minutes could not speak. Her parents wept aloud.

Edward at length found courage to look on Agnes again. She was deeply affected, and seemed also unable to speak. But oh! the look of earnest pleading, of deep, unchanging love with which she regarded her lover.

"Edward," at length said Agnes, speaking with difficulty, and extending her wan hand, "I am dying, and I have long known it. To my fate I am resigned. My only wish has been to reach home, and ask your forgiveness ere I go hence. Had I followed your counsels; had I been less careless of my health, I would now have been well, and we would all have been happy. But the deed is done. I hope my heavenly father," she continued, raising her meek eyes above, "has forgiven me, and now I seek your pardon——"

"Oh! do not speak of it. God knows I have nothing to forgive," and he sobbed like a child.

"Yes! I have been sinful—vanity forebade me to do as you wished, and now I reap as I have sown. Oh! that fatal pride of dress. What matters it in the grave to which I am going in, what I have been decked while here. But do not weep for me," here a violent fit of coughing seized her, and for some minutes she could not speak. All wept. At length she gained strength to say,

"May God bless you, dear, dear Edward! You will sometimes think of me when I am gone?"

"Yes! yes! day and night, my own Agnes!" and he sobbed aloud.

She smiled—and it was an angel's smile—as she replied,

"Father, Edward—give me your hands—mother, dear mother, kiss me! I can now die happy. Farewell," and, almost before they were aware of it, her gentle spirit had departed.

Reader! my tale has a moral. May you, with God's blessing, profit by it.

ALCESTA: OR THE REWARD OF DISOBEDIENCE.

BY MRS. M. ST. LEON LOUD.

It was night, deep night, over the fair city of New York; the sound of revelry had died away; the gay votaries of pleasure had forsaken their usual haunts, and the windows so lately illuminated were closed and darkened. The streets were deserted by all save the untiring watchman, whose sonorous voice, ringing through the stillness as he proclaimed "past two o'clock," arrested the attention of many a weary ear, and caused the throbbing head to be suspended over the pillow, until the accompaniment "all's well" fell soothingly on the senses that were almost instantly steeped in oblivion. Alas! all was not well in at least one mansion, the most stately and elegant in Broadway, within whose walls the fairest and noblest of the city had that evening celebrated the birthnight of a young and lovely being. The guests had departed, and all was hushed in the dwelling, when the front door was softly opened and a female enveloped in a close hood and cloak, stepped forth into the darkness. One moment she paused and gazed irresolutely upward at the window of a chamber where a light was still burning; the next she drew her cloak more closely round, and descending the broad marble steps walked swiftly down the street until she came to a hack stand. One carriage alone remained, and by its side stood a person muffled up like herself, who met her with a rapturous expression of greeting, and handing her into the carriage, took a seat by her side. The rattle of the flying wheels as they dashed up the streets roused the inmates of that chamber as they were composing themselves to rest, murmuring blessings on the head of their idolized daughter, and, listening until the sound died away in the distance, they wondered who was abroad so late, and what could be the occasion of such haste. Little did they dream that morning would find them bereaved and desolate; that the child of their soul's affection, for whom they had toiled early and late, the joy of their aged eyes, and the light of their dwelling had forsaken them for a stranger; for truly he was little better than a stranger who had won the love of the beautiful Alcesta. Sleep on, parents of the Disobedient! for ere another night a thorn will be planted in your couch which will for ever banish "tired nature's sweet restorer." Sleep on! unconscious of the slight; the midnight drive; the hurried ceremony which gives your treasure to the arms of another. And oh! fail not to bless in your heart of hearts, the Power that mercifully hides from your eyes the page of her future destiny.

Life, gay, busy, bustling life, was pouring through every thoroughfare of the great city, like

the vital current through the human frame, when on board a noble ship the last sail was unfurled, the last order given,

"And away flew the light bark,
O'er the silvery bay,"

and the waves bounded gaily beneath her, as if proud of the precious burthen entrusted to their keeping; for never had a more noble looking pair trod her deck, than they who leaned over the taffrail with their eyes fixed on the receding city. One was a man of about twenty-five, whose tall, elegant figure displayed the most perfect proportions of manly beauty. Masses of curling black hair shadowed a countenance where the olive of Spain mingled with the lilies of a colder clime; for his brow was white as polished marble, while the lower part of his face was almost swarthy. But his eyes—who can describe the expression of the full dark orbs whose eagle glances wandered far and wide over the waters, ever and anon returning and resting on the beautiful being at his side. Flashing with intellect of the highest order, and revealing in their clear depths an unutterable devotion of soul, they sent forth at times such corruscations of boldness and recklessness as would have startled an observer more deeply versed in human nature, or less deeply in love than was Alcesta, for she it was who now stood alone—alone in the wide world, with the one who had beguiled her from duty and had caused her to incur the fearful penalty of disobedience, for her only protector.

"Juan," she said, as she turned her tearful eyes to his face, "look! the last spire has disappeared: we are alone upon the ocean!"

"Not alone, dearest," replied the deep, rich voice of Juan de Alvarez. "We are together. But why do you weep, Alcesta?" for her tears fell like rain on the hand she held; "what is there to fear, and what have you to regret? Am I not taking thee to a fair home in a sunny land, where the orange blooms wild, where flowers more beautiful than those of the gardens of the north spring up beneath the very feet, and where slaves shall anticipate thy lightest wishes? All shall do homage to the bride of Juan de Alvarez; and more than all, do I not love thee, Alcesta? nay, I adore thee; thou shalt be my guardian angel, my saint; and in the worship I render thee, shalt forget all other objects."

And even then, with the tears yet glistening upon her cheeks, like dew on the most delicate leaf of the rose, did Alcesta forget home and native land; the father who would have died to shield her from harm, and the mother whose whole life had

devotion to her happiness. Thus will it ever be; many a flower is reared with tenderness, watched over with sleepless eyes and yearning love, until it expands into perfect loveliness, but where, oh! where, is the looked-for return of grateful fragrance! It is scentless; it flaunts awhile in the sunshine; another gathers it, and the beautiful flower is borne away without a sigh, far from the "hand that hath nursed it." As Alcesta listened to his glowing description of the Elysian scenes awaiting them, of the palace where she would reign as queen, and the love that would be round about her like an enchanted circle, she forgot the hearts that were even then bursting with agony for her sake. Every feeling, every aspiration, was onward, onward; her thoughts went not back to the darkened chamber where one pale form lay extended as in death, while a white-haired man bent alternately over the couch in speechless woe, or with clasped hands called wildly on his child, his lost Alcesta. Oh! bitter and fearful must be the retribution on the author of such misery, for a day will come when the reward of the disobedient shall be meted out in overflowing measure.

Juan de Alvarez was descended from a noble Spanish family, who sought refuge from the internal commotions of their own land in the island of Cuba. Several generations had passed away since then, and by intermarriages many of the peculiarities of his race were lost, yet he inherited the fiery temperament, the pride, the quick sense of injury, and the ready arm to avenge it, with much that might have been exalted into chivalry had it not been tainted with a heartless selfishness that never belonged to the noble knights of Spain. Young, high-born, rich, and educated in strict adherence to the faith of his fathers, many a little peccadillo was overlooked or winked at, which would have been severely visited on the head of a more humble offender, for the golden offerings of the wealthy son of the true church were peculiarly acceptable to the treasury of St. Peter, established at Havana. Juan de Alvarez, therefore, lived as though the world were created solely for his enjoyment; and when, on a summer tour in the United States, he first beheld Alcesta, he dreamed not that any obstacle could interpose between his desires and their object. It was not long ere he read in the eloquent eyes that always met him with beams of joy, that his passion was returned; but the rejection of his suit by her father roused all the worst passions of his nature, and he vowed to win her, to rob the aged parent of his brightest jewel, if but in revenge for the fancied insult he received.

The father of Alcesta was a man of deep penetration, and he had discovered traits in the character of Juan de Alvarez which made him tremble for the happiness of his daughter; for with the keen eye of a parent, he perceived the impression made on her susceptible imagination by the insinuating address of the young Spaniard. His was a painful task, for never before had he thwarted her wishes, nor, proud and wealthy as he was, would he have

opposed her union with the poorest mechanic who bore an unblemished character, could he have been satisfied that her welfare was being promoted. But his only child was a treasure too precious to bestow on a stranger, and he felt that his duty as a parent required him to ascertain, if possible, the character and pursuits of the man who asked at his hands the highest earthly boon he possessed. Delicately, therefore, and cautiously, he approached the subject; but the inflammable honour of Juan took fire, and his hand rested involuntarily on the hilt of a jewelled dagger which he wore concealed in the folds of his dress. Burning with indignation, he rushed from the presence of the father and sought the daughter.

In a large and richly furnished apartment, Alcesta reclined on a sofa, her head resting on her hand, and her eyes closed as in deep thought, while the light of a full moon as it looked down from the blue depths of a cloudless summer sky, fell over and around her, as if to shield her with its pure and holy influence from the temptations of earth. The warm south wind came softly through the open windows, stealing as it passed the breath of numberless greenhouse plants, filling the room with fragrance. Long and silently did the maiden muse, unheeding all that surrounded her, for a dream of love was in her young heart, before which the moonlight, the flowers, the gorgeous drapery of the room, and the glowing Indian feathers and rose-lipped shells displayed in a curious Chinese cabinet of gold and ivory all faded into dull and commonplace realities. A rustling among the leaves of a superb orange tree near her broke her reverie, and Juan de Alvarez stood before her.

"Alcesta," he said, in an agitated voice, "I have come to say farewell for ever."

"Juan! Juan!"

"Nay, hear me, Alcesta: I have been spurned by your father; I have listened to words which no other man should have uttered and live, yet for your sake I spared him; I have been branded as an adventurer, a seeker of wealth; and my suit rejected; what remains but to say farewell and leave you, the victim of tyranny, condemned to a miserable existence, a very slave, or at best the slave of parental caprice!"

The blood mounted to the temples of the spoiled child of indulgence, and the wily Juan perceived that his words were producing their intended effect. He knelt before her, and his voice sank to the lowest tone of music as he whispered, "Fly with me, Alcesta, my beloved, fly, and I will be to thee more than father or mother."

Her head sunk on his shoulder, and she murmured, "I will go."

Ere he left her she had vowed in the sight of Heaven, and despite all opposition, to become the wife of Juan de Alvarez, to cling to him through weal or woe; and the day, the hour, the way, were all arranged. That night her father informed her of all that had passed between himself and Juan, and told her, even with tears, that his anxiety for

her future peace alone had compelled him to reject an alliance with one so utterly unknown. "My daughter," he said, as he bent over her and kissed her brow as he was wont to do before retiring to rest, "I am old and have had experience; believe me, this man cannot make you happy: and oh! should you be tempted to forget your duty, to disregard my entreaties, and despise my counsels, remember that your father, who never used toward you any language but that of persuasion, now commands you to listen no more to the addresses of Juan de Alvarez."

Summer had ripened into autumn—if that can be called autumn which is but a prolonged and more luxuriant summer—when in one of the most beautiful private residences in the city of Havana a gay party were assembled to welcome the fair northern bride of Juan de Alvarez to her new home. Palace-like indeed in its magnificence, beyond aught she had ever imagined, was that home, and with noble and queenly grace did its mistress move through the admiring crowd. One side of the long lofty apartment was separated from a spacious piazza by a row of slender marble columns, whose polished shafts glittered like crystal in the blaze of a thousand wax-lights. It was curtained at pleasure by a drapery of rose-coloured silk, which was now looped to the ceiling by silver cords, while the spaces between were occupied by vases of alabaster, filled with the rarest and most fragrant flowers. At one end the room terminated in a large bay window, in whose deep recess were placed light stands of gilded wood, supporting small delicate garden pots of porcelain, in which were reared, with great care and skill, the most fragile of exotics, plants which bloom but in certain portions of the tropics, and many that unfold their perfect beauty only beneath the beams of a vertical sun. In the midst hung a cage of golden wires, containing a pair of those far eastern birds,

"Whose wings, though radiant when at rest,
Lose all their beauty when they fly."

At the opposite extremity was a similar window opening upon extensive and highly decorated pleasure grounds, where, from among the orange and dark-leaved citron, many a marble statue gleamed out cold and white in the moonlight, while, at a short distance from the house, a fountain threw its sparkling jets high in the air, diffusing a refreshing coolness, and lulling the senses with its murmurs. Far in the distance, on the right, rose thick plantations of cocoa, banana, and other tropical fruits. It was a scene of enchantment to Alcesta; but at last her head swam with the swift revolutions of the flying waltzers, dazzled by the blaze of light, and faint with the overpowering perfume of flowers, she determined to steal away for a few moments where she could breathe more freely. She dared not venture alone into the grounds, where the undisturbed repose of nature invited her, but lifting the drapery from an arched

doorway she proceeded along a gallery lighted only by the moon streaming through the narrow Gothic windows, and opening another door found herself in a small room fitted up as an oratory. At the farther end of the room was a window of richly stained glass, the centre adorned by an exquisite painting of the infant Saviour, surrounded by likenesses of the twelve apostles. Before a full length picture of the blessed virgin, which occupied a niche on the right of the window, a taper was kept constantly burning, while on a small altar in an opposite niche was displayed a cross of precious stones. Alcesta paused, and her eyes fell on a countenance so calm, so divine, so full of heavenly compassion, that she was awe-struck, and fancying there was reproof in the almost living expression, turned hastily away. Not there, not there, could she rest; she, the doubly disobedient; and returning to the room she had left, passed unnoticed into the conservatory, where, in the deep, cool shadow, she rejoiced to find herself alone. No, Alcesta, thou art not alone, for, from among a few plants from the cold north, which droop and languish in the ungenial heat, the violet, the flower of memory, turns upward its deep blue eyes and speaks to thee of home. Instantly the past rushes over thee like a frightful dream; then comes the present; thou too art a stranger in a strange land. Thy tears fall fast upon the flower, not like the healthful and refreshing dew, but like the burning drops that sometimes fall when no clouds are in the heavens, precursors of a coming tempest. Alcesta wept bitterly; but at that moment the moon—the same glorious eye of night that had witnessed her disobedience, opened full upon her, and by its light she became aware that a pair of human eyes—large, lustrous, and black as night itself, were gazing at her through the light trellice which sheltered the window on the outside. The hour, the circumstance, the near proximity and fearful expression of the eyes, in which seemed concentrated a thousand conflicting passions and emotions, paralysed Alcesta, and consciousness forsook her. When she recovered the object of her alarm had disappeared. Her husband entered the alcove to recall her to the guests, and, rallying her discomfited powers, she was soon the gayest of the gay, and when she awoke the next morning the occurrence was remembered only as a dream. Winter, or rather the months which are called winter, in that

"—————sweet south clime,
Which knoweth and feareth no winter time,"

passed swiftly away in a continual round of parties and amusements that left no room for remorse in the heart of Alcesta, while in the unwavering, devoted love of her husband she forgot, or endeavoured to forget, all other loves. Then came the spring, with a wealth of vegetation, and a gorgeous robing of nature in flowers of every hue, from the snowy bridal blossoms of the orange to the blushing multiflora, each sending up its own peculiar offering of incense, till the very atmosphere was

heavy with their breath. Alcesta seemed to live in a new and bewildering, yet delicious state of existence, and feeling as if Paradise itself could scarcely offer enjoyments more exquisite, or objects more beautiful, than those which surrounded her, gave herself up to a dreamy sense of happiness, like a bark sailing on a waveless ocean. Alas! beneath the smoothest seas lie the sunken rocks on which many a goodly vessel is wrecked and lost. Her favourite resort, during the sultry hours of the day, was the piazza we have mentioned, and there she spent hours gazing down into a garden, separated only from her own by a high, close paling, as if to prevent the prying eyes of curiosity from penetrating its secrets. No eye, however, could discover more than that it was a wilderness of trees and shrubs, surrounding a house built in the style of an English cottage, with its long, low porch shaded by a screen of honeysuckle and jessamine. It was evidently inhabited, but an old black woman was the only being Alcesta had ever seen about the place. Could she be the sole occupant of a spot so lovely?

"Can you tell me, Juan," she said to her husband, "who lives in that sweet cottage? Perhaps some one is pining there in solitude whom it would be charitable to visit."

Juan de Alvarez bent for a moment more intently over the book he was reading, before he replied, with an indifference of manner so evidently assumed, that it was noticed by Alcesta, "Yes, that is, I have heard that it was occupied by a woman, but from the reports concerning her, not one with whom you would wish to associate. You had better make no inquiries about her; indeed, it will be displeasing to me, and might subject yourself to degrading suspicions."

From that hour, although the mystery which hung over the cottage and its inmates rendered it a more intense and interesting theme for conjecture, no allusion to it ever passed her lips. Believing that her husband knew more than he chose to acknowledge, she felt that the "electric chain" which had bound her to him had been struck, and its finest and most subtle chord snapped for ever. One year had elapsed since she became the wife of Juan de Alvarez; she was now the mother of his child; and with the first smile of her infant came a realizing sense of the bitterness of the cup she had prepared for her own parents, and she shuddered as she thought that at some future day he might inflict upon her heart also, the pangs "sharper than a serpent's tooth." Comfort thyself, Alcesta! not so will they be avenged whose gray hairs thou hast brought with sorrow to the grave. Ay! press him to thy bosom; he will be thy only comforter when all others have forsaken thee; when through long nights of agony thou prayest to die, his smile will revive thee, and his sweet voice recall thee to earth. But oh! deeper and more deadly is the stroke that awaits thee; he who won thee from duty; even he shall be thy destroyer. One day as Alcesta sat by the cradle of her sleeping infant,

rocking it gently while she sung in a low voice a song of old, a servant entered, and said that a little girl requested permission to see the baby.

"Let her come up, certainly," said Alcesta; and with a mother's pride she lifted the rosy boy to her lap, and awaited the entrance of her young visitor. In a few minutes a lovely child about five years old tripped noiselessly into the room, as if fearful of being considered an intruder.

"Come here, my dear," said Alcesta, "and get acquainted with little Juan;" and as the child raised her eyes and fixed them full on the speaker, the same undefined feelings of terror she experienced when she met that glance in the conservatory thrilled through the frame of Alcesta. The resemblance was too perfect to be mistaken, but was it not strange that something in the deep, full eyes of the child reminded her also of Juan? It could only be fancy, yet long after the little Beatrice—for she had asked her name—had departed, she sat pondering over the circumstance till thought itself became torture. When, the next day, she mentioned it to Juan, he laughed, but his brow grew dark, and soon after, telling her that he had received letters requiring his absence for a few days, he kissed her tenderly, and caressing his infant son, departed. What was it, Alcesta, that then came over thy young spirit like the terrible hush preceding the hurricane, and why didst thou tremble to thy heart's core, as the tender aspen quivers ere it feels the first breath of the tempest? Rise! and stand once more erect in thy pride and beauty before thou art howled down and crushed by the storm! It comes! it comes! Hide thee in the cleft of a rock! seek some sure defence! Alas! thou hast none.

Alcesta was preparing for repose; the rich clustering tresses of her auburn hair were released from their confinement, and a young slave was employing her skill in smoothing the refractory curls. Her task finished she trimmed the night-lamp, and repairing to a small room adjoining that of her mistress, the faithful Fanchette was soon in a deep slumber. The night was oppressive, and Alcesta remained sitting before the open window, enjoying the cool breeze which always springs up after nightfall. The moon was shining brightly when a shadow fell on the floor, and a female entered the room. Alcesta started up and would have fled, but a hand detained her, and a voice, sweeter than the tones of a lute, yet trembling as when the wind sweeps over its chords too harshly, addressed her. "Fear not, lady, but sit down, I would speak with you."

"I will call Fanchette," said Alcesta, advancing to the door; "I am alone and—"

"Call no one," interrupted the stranger, imploringly; "no human ear but your own must hear what I have to say, yet it is well that you have help at hand, if you have a woman's heart you will need it."

She sat down, and, terrified as she was, Alcesta was struck with the surpassing beauty of the face

and figure exposed to her view. She was pale as the dead, and the moonlight gleamed on her high forehead and noble features coldly as if it fell upon sculptured marble. Her long black hair, unconfined by comb or fillet, lay in masses upon her shoulders, from which the rich velvet mantilla had fallen, displaying the full, rounded outline of a perfect form, while from an exquisitely wrought chain of gold around her neck depended a diamond cross—the only ornament about her person. For the first time her eyes met those of Alcesta; yes! they were the same; once before she had seen them alone, and again in the beautiful child that had visited her. But the connecting link. *Was it only in imagination that the resemblance to Juan existed?* Feeling that a fearful tale was about to be unfolded, she sunk into a seat and covering her face with her hands motioned the stranger to proceed.

“To you, lady, who were born where slavery is unknown, what I am going to relate may appear strange, improbable; but God knows how many bleeding hearts can witness to its truth. My mother was a slave, of uncommon beauty, who boasted several removes from the pure African blood, belonging to a gentleman on whose plantation I was born. I have no paternal name. I am called Adèle. Of him we were purchased by the father of Juan, and I became the favourite waiting maid of Madam de Alvarez, who was pious and gentle as her husband was cruel and overbearing. From her I learned to love virtue and detest vice, lessons which few of my degraded race are taught. When I entered the family Juan was absent, nor did he return till I was sixteen years old, with a complexion scarce less fair, and feelings as refined, as those of his own sisters. It pleased him to offer me more attention than was proper for a slave to receive from her master; but how could I refuse *his* kindness, when all others were haughty and exacting. At last I loved him: yes! with my eyes open to the barrier between us, I loved him, devotedly, madly. Yet not as a slave would I become his, and often did I retire to my humble couch, and weep the livelong night on the bitterness of my lot. Born with feelings almost of loathing towards my own race, yet forbidden by the contaminating drops that flowed in my veins to raise my thoughts or hopes above them; and with a heart keenly alive to a sense of its degradation, I could have cursed the authors of my being; I could have rejoiced to die. I had free access to the library of my mistress, who had taught me to read; and Juan soon perceived that my mind was not uncultivated, and he, the noble, the rich, the free-born, found pleasure in the society of a poor slave. Oh! the unutterable joy of that moment when I found I was necessary to the happiness of Juan de Alvarez! About this time my master died. His daughters were married and settled in distant parts of the island; and I, with several others, became the property of Madam de Alvarez, who with a true Christian spirit instantly gave us our freedom. *They* went their ways, but I chose to remain, and soon after accom-

panied her to this place, where she purchased the cottage in which I now live. It was then that Juan proposed to make me his wife, and as I knew little of the forms of society I believed that the vows he plighted in the sight of heaven constituted a tie as sacred as though the assembled universe witnessed the ceremony. I was bound, however, by an oath, to keep our marriage a secret from his mother, and about a year afterwards she died, ignorant of the connection between us. From that period I never went abroad, nor until I became the mother of Beatrice did I fully realize my painful situation; but when I saw her all that the proudest mother could wish, yet shunned by her companions, debarred from the common privileges of education, and taunted with her parentage, I became wretched. Perhaps—for how could it be otherwise—my feelings exhibited themselves too plainly, for Juan, who had never lived with me openly, visited me less frequently, and I fancied treated me less kindly, and at last, without apprising me of his intention, he went to the United States. Who can tell the agony, the despair, the rage, which took possession of my whole soul when I learned that he had returned with a bride, and that they were to occupy the splendid mansion next my cottage. It was evident that he considered our marriage as a tie that could be shaken off at pleasure, and the rights of the poor quadroons trampled upon with impunity; but I felt that I alone was his wife in the sight of God, and driven to distraction, I vowed to revenge my burning wrongs on the innocent cause of my misery. That night, when the revel was at its height, I concealed a dagger in my bosom, and stealing into the shrubbery, crept along until I reached the conservatory. The first thing I saw was my intended victim, within my very reach, but as you stood, in your bridal dress, with the holy moonlight resting on your face, I paused. I witnessed your emotion, your tears; you too had been deceived, betrayed, and I relented. Had you appeared a happy, a triumphant bride, that hour had been your last. When I next saw Juan, which was not for many days, I reproached him, I wept, I raved, and threatened to tell you all; but he answered coldly, with the air of one who felt and determined to use his power, that unless I restrained my passions and promised to remain in perfect obscurity, he would remove me where I should never see his face again. Think of the intensity of my love when I consented to such degradation; to live in the very sight and sound of his bridal revelry, to see him go forth, day by day, with another on his arm; to endure all this that I might sometimes see him and hear his voice. I did consent, and for even the smallest portion of his love I would have borne the gnawings of the vulture at my heart until it was consumed; but you too became a mother, the mother of his son, the heir of his wealth and his proud name; and since then—but why should I speak of it—my brain is on fire, and I might utter things which you should not hear. He came to

last night after he learned that I had permitted Beatrice to visit you, and informed me that as I had thought proper to violate his orders I must abide the consequences. He has a small plantation in a desolate part of the island, and thither he has now gone to make arrangements for my abode. I will not go, unless by force, nor can I live longer and feel that I am cast aside as worthless. 'This dagger,' and a slender blade of steel flashed in the moonlight, "this dagger shall end my miserable existence, unless—and oh! lady," she continued, kneeling before Alcesta, and clasping her hands passionately together, "the sacrifice I ask cannot make you more wretched than I have been—unless you give me back the love of my husband—for so I will call him in spite of all after ties. You have wealth, you have other friends, a station in society, he is my all," and she buried her face in the folds of Alcesta's dress, while a convulsive shudder shook the whole frame of the injured quadroone.

During the whole of this recital Alcesta remained motionless, but the hue of death stole gradually over her face, and her limbs assumed its rigid coldness, and when the last words fell on her ear, she felt that her doom was sealed. She uttered no cry, but bending over the still crouching form of the poor Adèle, said in a calm tone, "Come here at this time to-morrow; and now leave me."

It was past midnight when the sleeping Fanchette was suddenly roused by the grasp of an icy hand on her arm, and starting up beheld her mistress standing by the bed, habited in a riding-dress, her eyes wild, and her cheeks flushed. "Rise, Fanchette," she said, in a strangely altered voice, "rise and dress Juan, quick; I am going a long journey; softly, softly, do not let him cry, there; tie on his cap and cloak, I will be back in a moment;" and proceeding to her dressing-room, she hastily packed a few jewels in a casket, and taking a small sum of money, she murmured, "Not for myself would I touch this hated gold, but *our* child; I could not see him starve." She returned to the room she had left. "Now, good Fanchette, get me a glass of cordial, water, something before I go."

The wondering girl obeyed, but when she brought the water her mistress had disappeared, leaving no clue by which to trace her steps, and from that night no tidings were ever heard on the island of the wife and son of Juan de Alvarez.

Five years had elapsed, when in one of the vine-covered cottages that overlook the bay of Pensacola a lady was sitting, gazing admiringly on the beautiful scene spread out before her like a fair picture, bathed in the soft golden haze of an Italian sunset. There lay the bay, sparkling in its gentle undulations like a sheet of silver, while close to the shore anchored many a gallant vessel, with the gay streamers of different nations fluttering in the breeze, and the white-sailed boats gliding noiselessly over its surface, bearing to their respective vessels the officers and men who had spent the day on shore. In the centre rode the far-famed

Macedonian, with the stately Philip of Macedon as her figure-head standing in bold relief against the glowing sky beyond. The broad pennant of the American Commodore floated proudly over her deck, from whence the inspiring strains of martial music were wafted far away inland, where, as the ear of the landsman caught the sound, his bosom bounded to the thrilling notes of "Hail Columbia." A little farther out lay several French vessels, and in the distance the white sands of Santa Rosa sparkled like the snow-banks of a northern clime. Nearer to the house stood groups of the pride of China, whose innumerable clusters of purple blossoms filled the air with perfume; and from among the thick glossy leaves of a large pecan tree, a mocking-bird poured forth its wild variations as if in emulation of the instrumental music. The shadows of evening grew darker, the melody of the bird ceased, and as the last notes of a national air died away, the report of a cannon was heard from the Macedonian. Instantly flash after flash lit up the bay as a gun from every ship in the harbour answered the signal in quick succession, and after a short interval the same sound came booming over the waters from the distant navy yard. It was nine o'clock, all was silent, and Mrs. Clinton rose to retire, when a knock at the door arrested her, and the Episcopal clergyman entered the room. Not too late or too dark was the hour for the minister of that gospel which teacheth charity to venture abroad on his errand of mercy.

"I know you will excuse my untimely call," he said, as he took the offered seat. "I could not sleep until I had enlisted your benevolence in behalf of a poor sufferer whom I have just found out;" and he proceeded to relate the occasion of his visit.

Mrs. Clinton was affected to tears. "And you say she is from the north," said the kind lady, "that is another claim on my attention, for I too am a northerner. Yes, I will go early in the morning."

When the clergyman was gone she felt as if she could not wait until morning to commence her labour of love, and in the spirit of the exhortation, "What thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might," she spent some time in collecting and placing in a large basket such things as she knew were most acceptable to the sick; nor did she hesitate to spare from her own wardrobe a supply of such garments as were necessary for an invalid. At no great distance from the residence of Mrs. Clinton stood a row of large, old, wooden houses, surrounded after the Spanish fashion with balconies, most of which were broken down and dilapidated; the chimneys had gradually crumbled away; several portions of the high square roofs had been carried off by the storms, which in that climate are very severe; the wind whistled through the broken windows, and altogether an air of the greatest desolation hung over the place. Few of the rooms were habitable, yet wherever an apartment afforded shelter from the weather, it was occupied by

Irish emigrants, whom the prospect of employment had brought over in great numbers.

Mrs. Clinton soon found the object of her search, and ascending a narrow winding stairway, so dark that it was with difficulty she groped her way to the landing, she opened a creaking door, and a scene of the most squalid misery presented itself. The walls of the miserable room were black with the smoke and dust of years, no drapery shaded the window from the hot glare of the sun, or concealed the aperture where tattered garments occupied the place of glass; while its only furniture consisted of a pine table and a few broken chairs, save in one corner spread on the floor a mattress of the meanest description. A few sticks gathered from the common, smouldered on the hearth, but except an earthen vessel containing a little gruel, not an article of food or the coarsest utensil employed in its preparation was to be seen. "Can it be possible," thought Mrs. Clinton, as the utter poverty and cheerlessness of the place struck to her very heart, "that in this room a human being is dying." She approached the pallet and beheld an emaciated form, thinly covered by a faded, worn-out quilt, her cheek resting on another which was rolled up in the form of a pillow. She slept, and kneeling down Mrs. Clinton contemplated in silence a countenance wasted indeed by sorrow and suffering, but retaining traces of exceeding beauty. Her arms lay outside the covering, the thin white hands clasped firmly together as if utter hopelessness rested on the heart of the sleeper, and over the wretched pillow, mingling with the straws and dust of the floor lay long, rich, but neglected tresses of auburn hair, its brightness and beauty gone for ever. Her brow was pale, yet the crimson which burnt on her cheeks told of a consuming fire within. Ah! poets may paint from the treasures of their imagination the more than earthly beauty with which consumption enrobes her victims. Like the gorgeous hues of the autumn leaf ere it leaves the bough for ever; like the soft, yet glorious colours of the summer sky, ere night and darkness take place of light; like the fading rainbow, or the star whose beams are most brilliant just before the breaking of the perfect day; by all these things may its outward semblance be shadowed forth; but the deeper world within, who can know it? Who but the doomed one can know the unutterable shrinkings of the spirit, as the waves of time close over its last earthly retreat. When all that is bright and beautiful has vanished and into the last hour are crowded regret, it may be remorse for the past; the present, with its agonising pangs; and a dread of the dim, impenetrable future; add to this, deep, unmitigated poverty, and where are the allurements with which the far-off observer delights to invest the king of terrors. Thoughts like these passed through the mind of Mrs. Clinton as she bent over the dying woman, and there in the fearful presence of disease, with the dark wings of the angel of death hovering around them, the dutiful wept over the disobedient. It was Alcesta who

now moved uneasily on her hard couch, and opening her wild, bright eyes, said in a hurried voice, "Where is my child; where is Juan?"

She missed the accustomed watcher by her side, and the presence of a stranger in his place seemed to fill her wandering mind with fears that her treasure had been taken from her. With the tenderness which well becomes woman when ministering to her sister woman, Mrs. Clinton had nearly succeeded in quieting her alarm, when a little boy of six years old, entered; and never had Mrs. Clinton beheld a face so touching in its beauty, so full of patient suffering, revealing in its expression a knowledge of care and sorrow which contrasted painfully with his extreme youth and delicacy. He looked timidly at Mrs. Clinton, then stealing softly to his mother's side, threw his arms round her neck and burst into tears. "My poor child," sobbed the invalid convulsively, "what will become of you?" Mrs. Clinton gently drew him away, and taking him on her lap inquired the cause of his grief.

"I am so hungry, and we have nothing to eat. Mother has only tasted a little gruel for three days, and this morning I gathered a great many wild flowers and tried to sell them, but everybody here has so many beautiful flowers growing in their own gardens that I had to bring them all back."

"Do not cry, my dear," said Mrs. Clinton, her own tears dropping on the faded buds she held. "I will buy your flowers, and I will presently send you food enough for all day and every day. I wish to be of service to you," she continued, turning to Alcesta.

"Thank you, thank you; I do not deserve this kindness; I am but suffering the just punishment I have brought upon myself; but Juan—oh! who will be kind to him when I am gone?"

"There is one," said Mrs. Clinton, "who has promised to be a Father to the fatherless; but have you no relatives to whose care you can consign him?"

"None now," was the answer; "they who would have loved him for my sake are no more," and she sunk back overcome by her emotions. Mrs. Clinton lost no time in rendering her the assistance her destitute condition required, but human aid beyond the mere alleviation of her sufferings was of no avail, for rapidly was the Destroyer fulfilling his mission. Yes, Alcesta! thou art reaping the reward of thy disobedience. The reed on which thou leanedst has broken beneath thee: the love of the stranger hath failed to make thee happy, and the days of her who honoured neither father nor mother were cut off in the midst. Every day found Mrs. Clinton by the bedside of the dying Alcesta; her presence soothed, her kind hand held the cup to her parched lips, and her gentle voice read from the Book of Life, those precious promises of peace and pardon to the penitent which fall on the soul of the erring like the dews of heaven on flowers withered by the breath of the Simoon. Every heart, however scared and blighted, however steeped to the dregs in the bitter cup of life, yearns for sym-

pathy, and Alcesta found relief in pouring her long pent-up sorrows into a human ear. "I cannot die," she said, "until I have told all. Can you, who have borne with me so long, bear yet a little longer?" And in the intervals of pain and weakness, Mrs. Clinton gathered the outlines of the melancholy history we have related, and its conclusion.

On that fearful night, after Adèle departed, Alcesta remained with her head bowed upon her hands, communing deeply with her own heart. She loved Juan de Alvarez, but not with the passionate devotion which constituted the very existence of the quadroone. She could reason calmly, and while writhing under a sense of the wrong she had sustained, felt that Adèle had been still more deeply injured, and that she had unconsciously and therefore innocently alienated the affections of Juan from their first object. He had deceived her, wounded her in the tenderest point, and it was with a feeling of proud dignity that she resolved to tear at once and for ever, his very memory from her heart. Adèle might sue for his love; might remain though free, yet a slave in spirit, and be satisfied with the worthless possession of a divided heart; but Alcesta, never! She sprang from a purer, nobler race, and disdaining all feelings of love for one who had forfeited her respect, resolved to fly, she knew not whither, she cared not where, so that she might never meet him again. Her first thought when she passed for ever from the threshold of her husband's sumptuous abode, was to endeavour to secure a passage in one of the ships in port, and for that purpose she bent her steps towards the cottage of an old sailor to whom she had once rendered an important service. To her joy she found Diego preparing for a voyage; the boat already waited to convey him on board a ship bound for New Orleans, and in less than an hour Alcesta was once more upon the ocean. Once more the moon looked down upon her, a fugitive; but where was the companion of her first flight? where, oh! where were the hopes that then shone brightly on her future? She pressed her more than orphaned child more closely to her bosom, and for the first time, tears moistened her burning eyes. In a few days she once more trod her native soil, but far distant from her native home. She knew that her parents were dead; all places were alike to her, and she took lodgings in New Orleans. But her slender stock of money was soon exhausted; one after one her jewels were disposed of, and at last she went forth with her infant in her arms, unknowing how they were to procure their next meal, or where lay their heads when night overtook them. Then came weeks and months and years of wanderings from place to place; of struggles to obtain an honest livelihood, with days of toil, and nights of sleepless anguish, descending step by step into the very depths of poverty, until with anxiety, exposure and sorrow, her health gave way. Long did she strive for the sake of her child with the disease that had fastened upon her; but with scarce clothing enough to protect her from the weather, and no

food save the scanty alms of those poor as herself, it became too mighty to resist.

"Two weeks ago," she continued, "I came to this place to die, and through the kindness of the poor German family who occupy the room below, I obtained this shelter. Since then we have been dependent on them for sustenance; it has been little for one in my situation, but I am thankful. Oh! Mrs. Clinton, may you never know what it is to feel life ebbing away, without one familiar voice to console you, or hold a cup of water to your parched lips; to pass day after day without medicine or food, and night after night in sleepless darkness, to wish for even a farthing candle to enliven the long, terrible hours, yet have it not. I know that I have but few days, perhaps hours to live, but I trust I am like the returning prodigal, for you, who have been to me an angel of mercy, have taught me that there is a Father in Heaven who will receive the repentant wanderer. I do not wish to live, yet there is still one tie binding me to earth; my child, my poor Juan, what will become of him?"

The door was pushed open and a man in the coarse garb of a sailor entered the room leading Juan by the hand. It was the same who had assisted Alcesta in her escape, and having accidentally met Juan in the street, his resemblance to his mother struck the honest tar so forcibly, that he accosted him, and learned that his benefactress, she who had once saved him from the disgrace of a public punishment, was dying in want. Conducted by Juan he proceeded at once to her miserable abode, and accustomed as he was to scenes of suffering, the weatherbeaten sailor drew his rough hand across his eyes when they fell on the wasted form which he had last beheld stately and beautiful. Ere he left the room, he had promised to protect to his latest breath, the child so soon to be an orphan, and with the blessing of the dying upon his head, he departed.

That night one of those terrible storms which are of frequent occurrence passed over the city of Pensacola. The heavens were on fire, and peal after peal of thunder seemed to shake the very earth; the waters of the bay, lashed to fury by the wind, were thrown in jets of foam far on the shore; the tall masts of the shipping bowed like reeds; trees were torn up by the roots, and the smaller shrubs and plants suffered universal destruction. Sleep visited not the eyes of Mrs. Clinton during the whole of that dreadful night, for her thoughts were with Alcesta, and with the first dawn of morning, regardless of the wind which still blew violently, she hastened to the house. Trembling with undefined dread, she entered the room, where the gray light of morning was struggling dimly through the dusty windows, and going to the bed, softly lifted the covering which concealed the face: she was dead. The nurse who had been stationed to watch with her, appalled by the terrors of the night, had deserted her charge, and thus amid darkness and storm, the spirit of the erring, yet penitent Alcesta had passed to its last account. Across the foot of

the bed lay Juan in the deep, unconscious slumber of childhood, the tears he had been shedding still resting on his cheeks, and the rich curls of his dark hair clustering about his innocent face. Sad, sad will be thy awakening, fair child of orphanage and poverty.

After making the necessary arrangements for the decent interment of the poor remains, Mrs. Clinton returned to her own sweet and happy home, and in the solitude of her chamber, wept over the victim of disobedience. That same afternoon, when the storm had passed away, and the sun shone out bright as the smile of angels welcoming the newly arrived to the gates of paradise, they buried her. A plain, unstained coffin of pine was placed in a cart driven by a negro; another

with a spade on his shoulder walked by its side, and with Diego and the sobbing Juan, were all who attended to the grave the unfortunate Alcesta. And there she sleeps calmly and alone; her memory will pass away from among men, and but for this brief record her very name be forgotten.

And Juan; the child not of shame, but of sorrow, shall he go forth to bear the heavy curse of poverty and dependence, while the fair inheritance of his mother, and the princely possessions of his father pass into the hands of strangers? Perchance we may learn of his wanderings, for Diego will not fail to inform Mrs. Clinton of all that occurs to the orphan in whose welfare she took so deep an interest; and through her, gentle reader, it shall be communicated to you.

ALINA DERLAY; OR THE TWO CAPS.

A TALE.

BY MISS LESLIE.

(Concluded from page 120.)

PART THE THIRD.

IN another moment Alina made her appearance, and both hopes and fears were at an end. On her head was the cap made by aunt Elsey.

Imogene could scarcely restrain herself from uttering an exclamation: and little Cora actually did so. Leonard looked surprised and displeased: Mrs. Rochdale surprised only: and Mr. Rochdale wondered what was the matter. But the face of Edwin brightened: and hastening towards Alina, whose cheeks were suffused with crimson, and whose beautiful eyes were cast on the ground, he put her arm within his, and led her to an ottoman in one of the recesses; saying softly as they crossed the room, "Dear Alina, you are true to yourself: I rejoice—and congratulate you."

Encouraged by the approbation of Edwin Rochdale, and conscious that she had done rightly, Alina made an effort to throw off the embarrassment that had nearly overcome her on appearing in such a head-dress; for though the act was voluntary, her youthful nerves had been greatly fluttered by its performance.

"The worst is now over," continued Edwin; "and since you have made this sacrifice to affection and gratitude, (a sacrifice which I now confess to be no trifling one,) I hope you will be able to rally your spirits, and to go through the evening bravely."

He looked at her again; and her motive for wearing it, made the cap, in his eyes, appear beautiful.

"Dear Edwin," said Alina, "I knew that I should be sure of your approval."

Edwin felt as if he never again could be susceptible of an unhappy sensation.

"I perceive," continued Alina, "that every one is looking at the cap, and wondering, of course, why I wear it. No matter. Let them attribute it to bad taste, to whim, or to eccentricity. Politeness will restrain them from making any remarks in my hearing, or from asking me questions about it. The guests that are here to-night may discuss the subject a little to-morrow: yet, even then, what can they say, but that Alina Derlay wore a very singular and a very unbecoming cap at her birthday party. I can only hope that this evening I may say or do nothing calculated to excite animadversions of more importance."

"I am sure you will not," replied Edwin

warmly; "you never do—you never can. You may well afford to wear for once an ugly article of dress. All who know Alina Derlay, and appreciate her as she deserves, will feel confident that in this, as in everything else, she can only be actuated by a good and sensible motive."

Just then some of Alina's young friends came in; and having paid their compliments to Mrs. Rochdale, they repaired to our heroine. Alina rose to receive them, and saw that, for a moment, they looked earnestly at her cap. "I must endeavour to get used to this," thought Alina; and, assisted by Edwin, she commenced a lively conversation with the Miss Delfords and their brother; and in a little while she entirely forgot the *outré* appearance of her head. Edwin was shortly obliged to leave her, to do the honours to two very diffident young gentlemen, about his own age.

In the mean time, Julien Sandoval, who being in the other room, had not recognised Alina when she entered, said to Leonard Rochdale, "I have not yet seen my lovely little friend Miss Derlay. Will you conduct me to her?"

Leonard, much vexed at his fair cousin for wearing the redoubtable cap, thought she was now going to receive her punishment; and taking the arm of Julien led him immediately to Alina, and presented Mr. Sandoval to Miss Derlay with a glance of mischievous significance. Alina changed colour, and could not repress her confusion, as Julien looked for a moment in evident amazement at her singular *coiffure*; which, indeed, was so unfavourable to her face, that he thought she had grown up with far less beauty than her childhood promised.

Alina introduced Mr. Sandoval to the two Miss Delfords, who were sitting near her: both of them very handsome girls, with their profusion of hair beautifully arranged, and gracefully decorated with a few exotic flowers. These young ladies talked to Julien about Paris; the company began to arrive rapidly; and soon was heard the sound of the music, as a signal for the dancing to begin. Leonard Rochdale requested the hand of the eldest Miss Delford, and Julien Sandoval immediately became a candidate for that of her sister. Alina Derlay endeavoured to check a rising sensation of disappointment; and the idea struck her, that had it not been for the cap, Julien Sandoval would have danced the first set with herself. "I must indeed look ugly in it," thought the poor girl.

Just then came up Altham Linsley, a very handsome young gentleman, originally from Brookfield, but now practising law in Philadelphia, and a frequent visitor at Mr. Rochdale's. He could not at first discover why Miss Derlay looked so much less lovely than usual; but on observing her cap, he at once supposed it must be that which diminished her beauty. "Have you any message to Mrs. Wendover?" said he; "I am going to Brookfield the day after to-morrow, on a visit to my mother and sisters. What shall I tell your good aunt?"

"Tell her," replied Alina, resuming her cheerfulness, "that I am well: and that you saw me wearing, on this occasion, the cap she was so kind as to make me for the purpose; and on which she has bestowed such a variety of excellent needle-work."

"When I was last in Brookfield," said Linsley, "I frequently saw Mrs. Wendover at work on a cap, which I recognise to be the same that is now on your head. She enjoined me to secrecy, supposing you would enjoy her gift the more for its coming unexpectedly. Excuse me for saying that I can now understand and appreciate your motive for wearing, this evening, a head-dress which cannot be otherwise than at variance with your usual excellent taste. May I ask the favour of your hand for the dance?"

Alina complied; and Altham Linsley led her to the cotillion in which Sandoval and Miss Delford had taken their places: Leonard and Miss Julia Delford were also there. A few moments before, as Imogene passed Leonard with a gentleman who was conducting her to a cotillion in the other room, she had said softly to her brother, "I fear poor Alina has not yet been asked to dance. She now begins to feel the bitterness of the cap."

In this supposition Imogene Rochdale was mistaken. Alina's delight at finding that her aunt Elsey would so soon hear, by means of Mr. Linsley, that the cap had been worn as intended, counterbalanced the little mortification she had felt at not opening the ball with Julien Sandoval. She danced opposite to him. And in those days young people *really* danced: not having yet adopted the absurd fashion of merely walking through the cotillion. Also, the figures of the cotillions were diversified, graceful, and amusing: while those of the present time are characterized by nothing but an insipid sameness.

Alina now felt very happy; and she rejoiced in the sacrifice she had made for the gratification of her aunt. The animation of her beautiful countenance, and the grace and lightness of her dancing, riveted the attention of Sandoval, who began to think that, in spite of the cap, she was the loveliest girl he had ever beheld; and he experienced an immediate revival of the interest he had taken in her when she was just emerging from childhood.

When the set was over, and the gentlemen had conducted the ladies to their seats, and the lemonade, &c. was handing round, Linsley, who had

known Sandoval before he went to France, (having frequently met him at Mr. Rochdale's,) expressed his pleasure at this opportunity of renewing acquaintance with him. They entered at once into familiar conversation: and Linsley was so full of what he considered Alina's magnanimity, that he could not refrain from introducing the subject; remarking to Sandoval, "You did not sufficiently envy me my charming partner. I should not have been so fortunate as to obtain her hand for the first set, but that (to their shame be it spoken,) there was to-night a little less *empressement* than usual among the young men for what, under any circumstances, they ought to have regarded as a pleasure and an honour. And it was merely because she does not look quite so lovely as usual. Confess the truth, Sandoval: after your long absence, were you not somewhat disappointed in Miss Derlay's appearance?"

"I acknowledge," replied Sandoval, "that my first impression this evening with regard to the young lady's beauty was somewhat less vivid than I had anticipated."

"It is only her cap," said Linsley: "nothing but her cap, I can assure you. She lost so much of her hair by a severe illness, that it was thought expedient to cut off the remainder; and till it has grown again sufficiently, she is under the necessity of wearing caps."

"I have no objection to caps," renewed Sandoval, "provided they are pretty ones. Generally I think, if tasteful and simple, they rather improve than diminish the beauty of a female face."

"You mean to imply," said Linsley, "that Miss Derlay is somewhat disfigured by her present head-dress. And so undoubtedly she is. But this you may depend on: she has excellent reasons for wearing it this evening. Reasons that, if known, would throw additional light on the goodness of her heart and the strength of her mind."

"I will go this moment," said Sandoval, "and endeavour to engage her for the next set."

"Do so," replied Linsley, "but first, (as a reward for your generosity,) I think I can let you into the history of this cap."

He then related all he knew or conjectured of the circumstances connected with it. It was well for the delicacy of our heroine, that her friend Mr. Linsley was not aware of the whole extent of the sacrifice, her relinquishing the very natural desire that a young lady always feels to look well in the eyes of the man she prefers to all others; particularly after a long absence. Had Linsley known this feature of the case, he would have averred in his high admiration, that she might "trample on the Greek and Roman glory."

Julien Sandoval was successful in his application: and Alina's eyes involuntarily sparkled as she promised him her hand for the ensuing cotillion. With the characteristic enthusiasm of his nation, the ugly cap he now regarded as a thing pre-eminently beautiful: and he led Alina to the dance as he would have led a fair young princess,

crowed with a circlet of diamonds. Alina was afraid of seeming too happy: but Sandoval was afraid of nothing, and showed plainly how delighted he was with his partner. When that set was over he endeavoured to engage her for the next; but this she declined, alleging that, in civility to her guests, she wished to dance but very seldom during the evening: leaving to them all the places in the cotillions. Sandoval would have been very happy to have remained beside Alina, and talked to her during the residue of the ball; but she told him she must attend to those of her friends who were not dancing, and requested him to allow her to introduce him to Miss Stanmore, a very animated and handsome girl, who would be much pleased to dance with a gentleman just from Paris.

Meanwhile, Altham Linsley had managed to circulate the story of the cap extensively among the company; and it was corroborated by the young Rochdales when they were questioned as to its authenticity. Every one was glad to find a solution of the mystery: and every one did justice to her motives, and eulogized her as she deserved. "What a daughter she would make!" said the mothers. "What a wife!" said the fathers.

The remainder of the evening passed away delightfully: and our heroine forgot that the cap was on her head. No one now appeared to notice it; and she was not aware that its history had been circulated among the company. She danced no more herself; but was very assiduous in providing partners for her guests, and seeing that all in turn had their share of enjoyment and attention. She introduced Sandoval to various fine girls whom she knew would be very well pleased to dance with a young man of his appearance and manner; for he was decidedly the most popular personage of the whole party. After most of the company had gone, and when there were only enough remaining for a sixteen cotillion, Sandoval approached Alina, and demanded, as a recompense for having submissively performed his duty with all the partners by her recommended, that she would send him home happy by dancing this last set with him. She complied, and, during that dance, he resolved, as far as depended on himself, to endeavour to secure her as his partner for life. And, though he did not tell her of this resolution, she somehow knew it as soon as it was formed.

At length the finishing dance concluded; and when Sandoval led Alina to a seat, seeing that she was really very much fatigued, he considerably took his leave. Mr. and Mrs. Rochdale gladly retired. Little Cora, having grown sleepy, had been sent to bed two hours before. The other young people of the family lingered awhile on the sofas to talk over the ball, as young people always do.

"Well, dear Alina," said Imogene, "I felicitate you on the cap going off so well. Really, it has had *un grand succès* after all.

"Not the cap, but the wearer," said Leonard,

"severe as the trial must have been, she has stood it manfully, or rather womanfully: and come out triumphant. Commend me to the old proverb, 'handsome is that handsome does.'"

"And yet," remarked Alina, "it was but a few minutes wonder after all. Every one was too intent upon other things to regard that cap for more than an instant. And whatever curiosity it might have excited, no one was so deficient in *l'usage du monde* as to talk of it."

"Not so fast, my sweet cousin," replied Leonard, "it was talked of more than you suppose. Even Sandoval spoke of it."

"Impossible!" exclaimed Alina, turning pale.

"Yes, he did," persisted Leonard.

"But only in reply," said Edwin, eagerly, "only in reply to Altham Linsley."

"Dearest Alina, do not be disconcerted," said Imogene Rochdale; "but, indeed, Linsley related the whole story: adding, that on his last visit to Brookfield, he had himself seen aunt Wendover working at that very cap; and that at her request he kept the secret, that its arrival might cause you an agreeable surprise. And Linsley was so possessed with your self-devotion and heroism as he called it, in wearing such a thing on this evening, that he could not forbear relating the circumstances to every one he knew: including Julien Sandoval."

"And the natural consequence is," said Leonard, "that you have won 'golden opinions from all sorts of men.'"

"And women too, I hope," added Imogene.

"My chiefest cause of rejoicing," said Leonard "is, that aunt Wendover's cap, having amply done its duty, may now be allowed to rest in its band-box, and aggrrieve us no more."

"I do not think Alina will try to wear it out," said Imogene.

"That would be impossible," returned Leonard, "so, peace be with it."

"The needlework is really wonderful," said Imogene, examining it attentively. "Alina, these frills might be converted, somehow, into excellent trimming for the neck and sleeves of a French muslin dress; and the pointed head-piece would make very pretty cuffs."

"Aunt Elsey must see me wear the cap," said Alina, "on my next visit to Brookfield."

"Then after she has enjoyed the sight," resumed Imogene, "she will probably be very willing that you should appropriate it to some rational purpose."

"Well, well," said Leonard, "we shall soon have literal proof that 'night's candles are burnt out;' and if we stay much longer we may seek our couches by the light of the morning star." He then took his leave, repeating

"When wearied wretches sink to sleep
How sweetly soft their slumbers lie."

And they all retired to resign themselves to that repose which is seldom more needed than after a ball.

According to custom, on the morrow they saw no visitors; it being understood that no one is to intrude on a family immediately subsequent to a large dancing party. After the intervention of a day of rest, which, however, was a day of unrest to the impatient Julien, that young gentleman presented himself at Mr. Rochdale's before the usual visiting hour; and saw Alina in a chintz morning dress with a pretty little close cap drawn with pale pink ribbon, and looking sweetly. We need not say that his visits became more and more frequent, and more and more welcome.

In a few days arrived a letter from Mrs. Wendover, of which the following is a transcript.

"My dear Alina—

I was overjoyed to hear from that kind young man Altham Linsley that my humble offering arrived in excellent time for your ball, and that throughout the whole company, it excited great attention, bordering on amazement. To be sure we should not praise ourselves; but it is indeed a surprising cap: that I think every body must acknowledge. I do not wonder that, as Altham Linsley says, every lady and gentleman that came in fixed their eyes upon it. He tells me that he heard several ladies remarking the neatness of the work, and several gentlemen counting the cockades. All this is naturally very gratifying; but I try not to let it puff me up. Yet still it is a great satisfaction and happiness, and far more than repays me for all the time and pains I took with it; even if it had not (as it did) given me so much pleasure to work for the benefit of my beloved Alina. I could think of nothing else all the evening of your birth-day ball; and I was imagining to myself how sweetly you were looking in it at that very time.

I have one request to make of my darling girl, which I trust will be cheerfully complied with. If it is not too great a privation, will you abstain from wearing the cap any more, till you come to Brookfield on your next delightful visit; so that I may see you in it, all nice and fresh, at the tea-party I always give to the neighbours to celebrate your arrival. I wish it could be a bridal party; and perhaps it may, for when I asked Altham Linsley if Alina in her aunt Elsey's cap had not made a conquest of somebody worth having, I thought he looked rather queer. It was not himself, however, for he is engaged to Harriet Mildens, and they are to be

married next winter. Altham is a fine young man: but when I questioned him closer as to the cap having gained you a sweetheart, he said he was as discreet as Harry Percy's wife, and 'never uttered what he did not know.'

Husband is pretty well; but for fear of another fit, we think it best for him to stay at home and keep quiet. Indeed whenever people are old there is no place like home; and the less they go and worry themselves, the longer they are likely to last.

Farewell my darling girl; write very soon, and tell me everything. Your loving aunt

ELSEY.

P. S.—Be sure to keep rolls of wadding in all the bows of the cap to fill them out, and preserve their shape."

To conclude, our readers will not be surprised to hear that the affiancement of Alina Derlay and Julien Sandoval, took place at no distant period after the ball. Their marriage followed, as soon as a house could be prepared for their residence. The bridal excursion *was* to Brookfield, the tea-party *was* given to the neighbours, and again our heroine wore aunt Elsey's cap; to the great delight of the good old lady, who congratulated her niece on what she called "its superior becomingness."

Shortly before the wedding (at which he felt himself unequal to the effort of being present) Edwin Rochdale entered as a student in the theological department of one of the New England colleges. Eventually he became pastor of a church in that section of the country; and his love for Alina having long since subsided into friendship, he married the beautiful and amiable daughter of an opulent gentleman belonging to his congregation.

The Rochdale family continued to prosper in all its branches. Julien Sandoval proved himself an active, honourable, and judicious man of business, as well as an accomplished gentleman; and with such a wife as Alina Derlay, he could not be otherwise than happy.

We forgot to mention, in its proper place, that on the evening of her marriage Alina (having by Julien's desire reserved it for the purpose) appeared, to the great delight of her cousins, in Madame Rubaniere's beautiful transparent little cap, with the pure white ribbon, the snowdrops, and the lilies of the valley.

AUNT MERCY.

BY MRS. C. LEE HENTZ.

• We sat together in the little back parlour the evening before our father's departure. He was a sea-captain, and bound for a distant voyage. We had not been separated from him since our mother's death, and oppressed by a sense of coming loneliness, I listened to the autumnal wind, that sighed against the windows, thinking it the most melancholy of earthly sounds. My father put his arm affectionately round each of us, as we sat on either side of him, and drew us closer to him. He did not speak for some time, but gazed steadily into the fire, as if he feared to look upon us lest he should be betrayed into some unmanly weakness. "My daughters," said he, at length, "my heart is relieved from great anxiety on your account. I have two letters, received almost simultaneously, both containing affectionate offers of a home to one of you, during my absence. The choice must be left to yourselves."

"Who are they from," cried Laura, eagerly, "tell me, dear father, do?"

"One is from your Aunt Mercy," replied my father. Here Laura's countenance fell. "The other from Mrs. Belmont, whom you once visited and admired."

"Oh! yes," exclaimed Laura, with sparkling eyes, "I remember Mrs. Belmont perfectly. She is the most charming woman I ever saw, has the most elegant house, and keeps the most delightful company. I thought when I was there I should be the happiest creature in the world if I could live as she did. Oh! father, let me go to Mrs. Belmont's, and send Fanny to Aunt Mercy's."

"And what objections have *you* to go to Aunt Mercy's?" said my father, without addressing me, who continued to hold his hand in silence, for my heart was too full to speak.

"Oh! I never did like Aunt Mercy," said Laura with a look of disgust. "She is so precise, and formal, and fanatical. She is an old maid, too, you know, and they say they are always peevish and ill-natured. Then she lives in a small house, almost in the woods, and sees no company but the cats. I am sure I would die with homesickness if I were to stay with Aunt Mercy."

"And what do you think Fanny will do?" asked my father, in a tone which I thought breathed of rebuke.

"Fanny," repeated Laura as if she were waking to a consciousness of my existence, "why Fanny is very different from me—and I dare say would content herself very well. Besides, I am the oldest, and have a right to the first choice, and if I choose Mrs. Belmont's, Fanny is obliged to go to Aunt Mercy's whether she wishes it or not."

"I should like to see a little more regard for your sister's comfort, Laura," he replied, knitting his brows; "I am sorry to see you manifest so selfish a disposition, and as a just punishment, I shall insist upon the reverse, or, at least, that Fanny should exercise the privilege of selection."

Laura burst into a passionate fit of tears, declaring that she would rather stay at home alone, and would do so; for as for going to Aunt Mercy's it was out of the question.

"Since you give me the privilege of choosing, dear father," said I, distressed at Laura's violent emotion and the motive which excited it, "I shall be as happy with Aunt Mercy as I could be with any one while you are absent, and I think it very kind in her to make the offer. I should feel as little at home at Mrs. Belmont's as Laura would at Aunt Mercy's."

My father laid his hand upon my head, and shading back the ringlets from my forehead, gave me a look of approbation that would have repaid me for the sacrifice of my life if it were possible to enjoy the reward of such a sacrifice.

"You are a good child, Fanny," said he, "and you will be a happy one wherever you are. How much your eyes are like your mother's now you are looking down! and you are like her in character too. She always was ready to yield her own gratification when it interfered with the happiness of others. She never thought of herself." Laura looked uneasy while my father was speaking. The pleasure of gratified desire, and the mortification of rebuked selfishness struggled in her countenance—"If I ever return," said my father, rising and walking to and fro with folded arms and bent brow, "we shall see who has made the wisest choice."

I shall pass over my father's departure and its sad accompaniments. Minute detail is seldom interesting, unless it leads to the development of character, and as it is Aunt Mercy's character that I wish to describe, rather than my own, I hasten to the moment when I became an inmate of her household, Laura having previously been received into the home of Mrs. Belmont. I had but a dim recollection of Aunt Mercy, never having seen her since my early childhood. She lived in the deepest seclusion, seldom visited her relatives and friends, and when her visits were made to my mother I was at school, so that it was only through the medium of others I had obtained my knowledge of her character. I knew she must be far advanced in years, being the sister of my grandmother, not of my mother, and a feeling of awe began to steal over me as I drew near her dwelling, a kind

of wintry chill indicating that the snows of life were near. It was a clear, autumnal evening; the dark, brown woods skirted the road on either side, and here and there through the rustling foliage, I could see the stars sparkling and the deep blue sky shining, and sometimes I could catch a glimpse of waters flashing through the underbrush, and sometimes I could hear the low, gurgling sound of a stream, whose murmurs alone revealed its existence. 'The great secret of melancholy seemed diffused over the world. I felt as if I were alone in creation. I had no companion with me in the carriage. I had left no friends behind. My father was now launched on the billows, perhaps never to return. My mother slept the last, deep sleep. I was going to one, who from age, sanctity, and personal peculiarities seemed as far removed from the sphere in which I had been moving, as the planets above, revolving in their lone and distant orbits. Happy they who have never felt that orphanage of the soul which came over me with such a dreary and oppressive power. As the carriage turned into the yard, the silence surrounding the low white dwelling, almost embosomed in shade; the solitary light that gleamed through one curtained window; the complaining notes of a whippoorwill perched near the wall, added to the solemnity of the hour, and imagination, delineating the form of Aunt Mercy with cold, grey eyes, and wintry countenance and ancient costume, threw me into such a state of nervous debility, I had hardly strength to descend from the carriage and enter the door that opened as if by magic to receive me, for I had heard no sound of life. At first I thought it was a statue standing on the threshold of the inner apartment, so still and pale and erect it looked, arrayed in a robe of white, whose folds fell voluminously from the neck to the feet, and remained as calm as those of a winding sheet. A cap with a close crimped border surrounded the face, whose pallid hue corresponded with the death-like impression the dress had made. I trembled as I approached, as if an inhabitant of another world were awaiting to receive me, when the tall, still figure extending its hands, spoke in a sweet, tremulous voice, "Fanny, my child, is it you? welcome to the home of the aged."

At the sound of those kind, *living* accents, the spell of supernatural awe was broken, and throwing myself into the arms, which involuntarily opened to enfold me, I wept myself into calmness. I was hardly conscious of what was passing around me till I found myself seated by a cheerful fire, whose blaze revealed, while it warmed, the pure, white walls, the white curtains, that dropped to the floor without a single festoon, the white, ungirdled dress of Aunt Mercy: and by its bright reflection, I could see too, her gray parted hair, divided with the precision of a geometrical line, and her dark, deep-set eyes, that beamed like lamps through the mists of age. There was a fascination in the glance of those eyes, as they were steadfastly fixed on me. They did not seem looking at my face, but my soul. The memory, not the fire of human passion

slumbered in their solemn depths. But, when withdrawing their fixed gaze from me, and lifting them upwards, she remained for a few moments in the same attitude, with her hands folded, there was a holy and sublime abstraction, that showed her thoughts were withdrawn from all external objects and were holding communion with the Great Invisible. Then, again turning to me she said, as if thinking aloud, rather than addressing me—"When I last saw her she was little more than a smiling infant, now she is what her mother was full twenty years ago. Time! time! what a solemn thing is time. It carries us on day and night without slumbering or pausing, and we heed it not, till borne like me, almost to the shores of eternity, we listen with wonder to the dashing of the billows we have passed over, and look back upon the dark and troubled waters that heave themselves into rest on the borders of the promised land."

I gazed with reverence on this hoary mariner of time, thus surveying with a backward glance the untravelled wilderness before me, but I sighed to think she must have survived the affections and yearning sympathies of her kind, and that I must learn to repress in her presence the ebullitions of youthful emotion. Her next words convinced me how erroneous was this conclusion.

"I pity you, my child. You have a gloomy prospect before you, as the companion of age and loneliness. But the fountain of love is not dried up in my veins. The current flows warm and deep beneath the ice. If you seek wisdom, rather than pleasure, you may not in after years reflect with sorrow that you lingered a little by the wayside, communing with an aged pilgrim, who could tell you something of the mysteries of the journey of life. And something too, I trust," added she, placing her hand reverently on the Bible, which lay on the table by her side, "of that eternal country whither the young, as well as the old, are rapidly travelling."

Though I had been but a half hour in Aunt Mercy's presence, I had already gathered some precious lessons, and I looked forward to the hoard of wisdom I might acquire during my daily communion with her. Tenderness began to mingle with the awe she inspired, and when I retired to my own room, which was an apartment adjoining hers, I thought though the hours passed with my venerable relative might be very serious ones, they need not consequently be unhappy. When I first entered the chamber, however, I could not repress a nervous shudder. The same cold uniformity of white was visible that distinguished the room below. White walls, white curtains to bed and windows and an old-fashioned toilet table, with a long, flowing, white muslin petticoat, all presented a most wintry aspect. "Surely," said I, "Aunt Mercy has selected white, because it is the livery of angels. I shall not dare to think an unpolluted thought, surrounded by such emblematic purity. I shall be reminded of Him in whose sight 'the

heavens are not clean,' and 'who sitteth on a white throne in the midst of his glory.'"

The powerful influence of Aunt Mercy's solemn character was already visible in my reflections. That influence pursued me even in my dreams; for I dreamed that I was sailing alone in a little bark over an ocean, that seemed illimitable in extent, and unfathomable in depth, and that a tall, white figure defined on the dark and distant horizon, beckoned me onward, and ever and anon lifted a lamp that blazed in her right hand, and sent a long stream of brightness over the abyss of waters. As I came nearer and nearer, and the boat glided with inconceivable swiftness, the lamp flashed with such intolerable splendour that it awoke me, and opening my eyes, the sunbeams darted through the opening of the curtains directly in my face, and explained the vision of the lamp. My first thought was a dread of Aunt Mercy's displeasure for slumbering so late, for I had heard that she breakfasted at sunrise, but the kind manner in which she greeted me when I descended dispelled my fears.

"I knew you must be fatigued from your journey," said she, "and would not suffer you to be wakened, but to-morrow we will rise together, for your youthful frame can hardly require more hours for repose than mine. I always think when the Lord of day is on his way rejoicing and scattering blessings in his path, it is a shame for us to be laggards behind."

I blushed when I reflected what a laggard I had been, and that I, the young and buoyant, had even this duty to learn from the aged and infirm. Yet I could hardly call Aunt Mercy infirm. Her figure was still erect and dignified, her step unfaltering, and though time's engraving hand had left its tracery on her cheek and brow, her eyes, at times, not only flashed with the brilliancy, but expressed the energy of earlier years. She seldom smiled, but when she did, her countenance exhibited an appearance of indescribable serenity, reminding me of a lake by moonlight, when the wind just curls its surface, and the rays gently quiver in the motion. The first day I was excited by the charm of novelty. The perfect quiet and neatness that reigned in the household; the clock-work regularity with which everything was performed; the industry that harmonized so beautifully with this order and tranquillity astonished while it delighted me. It seemed impossible to me that human beings could live, and move, and work with so little bustle. Yet there was constant activity. Aunt Mercy herself was never idle a moment; she was either knitting, sewing or reading; indeed, her knitting-needles seemed a part of her fingers, and the stocking to grow under her touch, from a natural, not an artificial process. I wondered why she manufactured so many articles, for which she could have no possible use, but I soon learned that many were the feet she covered with her industry, as well as the mouths she fed with her bounty. Never was name more appropriately given, for far as her libe-

ral hand could reach her benefactions and her care extended. She never encouraged idleness or vice, but wherever there was infancy, orphanage, infirmity, and age, united with poverty, her charities descended gentle and unostentatious as the dews of heaven.

"You make me ashamed of the indolence of my past life," said I, as I watched her unwearied fingers; "I feel as if I had lived in vain; I have been praised because I was willing to do something for myself, and now I feel that it is only what we do for others deserves commendation."

"Praise is sweet," replied Aunt Mercy, "from the lips of those we love, but if we do good to others for the *sake* of this reward, we sacrifice the blessing of Him, who has presented to us higher and holier motives for action. Do not praise me, my Fanny, because I endeavour to 'do diligently what my hands find to do,' for the shadows of twilight are falling round me, and that dark night will soon come, wherein 'no man can work.'"

It may be believed by some, that the solemnity of Aunt Mercy's language; her constant allusions to death and eternity, and the inspired quotations with which her conversation abounded, would fill my young and ardent imagination with gloom and terror. But it was not so; they exalted, instead of depressing me; they created in me a thirst for sacred knowledge, a spirituality of feeling as sublime as it was novel—I could exclaim with a more heavenly ambition, than that which animated the Egyptian enchantress, "I feel immortal longings in me."

It was a somewhat novel sight, to see such close companionship and increasing congeniality of feeling, between two beings, so far removed by age from each other—the snows of winter only drew us closer together, and I almost dreaded to witness the spring-time of the year, lest, in the midst of its opening splendours, I should lose something of her divine instructions. An occasional letter from Laura, varied the pleasing monotony of my existence; she always addressed me as 'poor Fanny'—then as if that expression of condolence satisfied her sisterly affection, she expatiated on her gay and happy life, and the pleasures that courted her enjoyment; her volatile mind flew from one subject to another, from the theatre to the ball-room, from the ball-room to the concert, &c., with bewildering speed; and with all these dazzling scenes, she mingled descriptions of attending gentlemen: some had 'eyes of fire,' others 'tongues of eloquence' and 'lips of music,' and all were included in the compendious epithet 'divine.' I should have profited little by the example and precepts of the evangelical Aunt Mercy, if I had not revolted at the application of this term; I grieved at the levity of her sentiments; I did not envy her the pleasures that had such an intoxicating influence on her heart; I did not sigh for the admiration of that sex, from whose society I was so entirely excluded; I had never been accustomed to it, and the rapturous expressions of Laura astonished my young simplicity. One evening, after

the perusal of one of these letters, as I sat at Aunt Mercy's side, I ventured to address her in a more familiar manner than I had ever done before; I longed to hear her explain the mystery of her lonely life. "Dear Aunt Mercy," said I, taking her hand in mine, and looking earnestly in her face, "do you think it a sin to love?" She actually started at the question, and I felt her hand tremble in my clasp.

"Do you ask idly?" said she, fixing her deep eyes with a melancholy gaze on my face, "or do you, child as you are, speak from the heart's dictates?"

"No," answered I, blushing at the suggestion, "I know nothing yet of love, and judging from Laura's allusions, I think I never shall. But I have often wondered why you, who must have been very beautiful indeed, when young"—here a faint smile glimmered over Aunt Mercy's features, a lingering spark of vanity, flashing through the shades of threescore years and ten—"why you should have been?"—I began to hesitate, for I could not allow myself to use Laura's expression, and say 'an old maid'—then after a moment's reflection, I added, "why you should have been single, when almost every one marries; I thought, perhaps, you believed it sinful to love any one else but God." I would have given anything to have recalled the expression of my childish curiosity; I was terrified at the emotion exhibited in her usual placid countenance; her eyes assumed a look of wild anguish, contrasting fearfully with their wonted calm, religious glance; then slowly lifting them to heaven, and clasping her withered hands together, she exclaimed, "sinful! oh! my Father!—sinful indeed must be the passion, whose memory even now can raise such a tumult in these wintry veins; I thought all was peace here," continued she, unclasping her hands, and pressing them tightly on her breast, "the peace of God that passeth all understanding; but no, no, the troubled waters are heaving, heaving still." As she reiterated the last words, her head bowed lower and lower, her whole frame shook, and tears gathering in large drops, glided down her cheeks, through channels, which had long been dry. I felt as if I had committed sacrilege in thus disturbing the holy calm of her soul; a burst of flame, rising from the still waters that cover the buried cities of the plain, could not be more awful or surprising, than this storm of human passion, thus convulsing the bosom of age. I knew not in what manner to express my penitence and sorrow. I wept; I threw my arms around her; I actually knelt at her feet and implored her to forgive me. This attitude roused her from her trance-like state; she held out her right hand, and commanded me to rise. I rose and stood before her pale and trembling, like a culprit uncertain of her doom.

"Leave me, child, leave me," she cried "till I gain composure, from the only source from which the weary and heavy laden can find rest—long, long years have rolled away, since any human

being has struck the chord your hand has pressed. I thought it had ceased to quiver—I have deceived myself; I feel humbled in the dust; I would humble myself still more before the mighty hand of God. Leave me alone, my child, and when I am calm once more, you shall learn the history of my youth, and may you profit by its mournful lesson."

I withdrew to my chamber, grieved and agitated, yet awaiting with impatience the expected summons. But I heard Aunt Mercy enter her own room and close her door, without recalling me to her presence. She always kept a light burning during the night, that she might not disturb her servants, if one were required, but this night it was extinguished, and accustomed as I had been to see its rays streaming beneath the door, I shuddered at the darkness, of which my rashness had been the cause. I trembled when I reflected on the might of human passion—"Terrible, terrible," thought I, "must it be in its strength, if even in decay it can triumph over the coldness of age, and roll its wild waves over the traces the spirit of God has written on the soul. Let me be spared its desolating power; let me live on as I now do, calm and passionless, striving to walk in the path of duty, with an eye directed to heaven, and a heart devoted to God. Here, in this solitude, I am secure from temptation, and can know nothing of the struggles, of which to-night I have been a fearful witness."

The next morning I almost feared to look at Aunt Mercy, expecting to see the same wild and agitated countenance, but the placidity of heaven was on her brow. There might be an air of deeper humility; of more saintly meekness, if that were possible, but there was no other change. I felt a tenderness for her I had never experienced before. Aunt Mercy, the anchorite, the saint, was a being I revered; but Aunt Mercy, loving and suffering, was a being I loved. The day passed away, as usual, in industry and quiet, but when the evening came on, and we were seated again, side by side, at the lonely hearth, my heart began to palpitate with expectation, for Aunt Mercy suffered her knitting to remain untouched in her basket, and her book lay unopened on the table.

"My dear Fanny," said she, "your asking eyes shall not seek mine in vain; I have been steadily looking at the past, and am astonished at the calmness with which I can now review events, from which last night I recoiled with such dread; I have not slept, but prayed, and towards the dawn of morning, it seemed as if an angel came and ministered unto me. Like Jacob, I had wrestled for the blessing and prevailed. It is humbling to me to know that the reverence with which you have regarded me will be diminished, and that you will look upon me henceforth as a sinful and sorrowing woman; and yet I should rejoice that you will no longer ascribe to an erring creature, perfections which belong to God alone.

"When I was young—can you roll back the winters that have frosted my head, and restore me

to the spring-time of life? If you can you must think of me, at this moment, not as I am, but as I was, with the bloom of youth on my cheek, and its hopes warm in my heart. Let this thought, my child, check the high throbbings of youthful vanity; as sure as you live to reach the confines of age, you will, like me, present but a faded image of what you once have been; the eyes, those windows from which the soul looks forth, will be *darkened*, and the grasshopper prove a burthen to those elastic limbs. But the soul itself, my child, is undecaying and immortal; and can smile calmly over the ruins of the body, in the grandeur of its own imperishability."

She paused, and as I gazed wistfully in her face, I thought that Ossian could never have seen such a countenance as Aunt Mercy's, when he said that age was "dark and unlovely," for to me she was still beautiful, in her piety and meekness, with the chastened memories of other years blending, as they now were, with the holiest hopes of heaven.

"When I was young," continued she, "I was, like you, the companion of an aged relative, though my mother was living; but having the charge of a large family, she was willing to yield to my grandmother's wishes, that I might be taken into her household, even as her own child. I was the youngest of the family, and had never been out, as it is called, into the world, so I was contented in my new home, where I had leisure to indulge in my favourite amusement—reading. My grandmother, unfortunately, had a large library of ill-assorted works, a great portion of which were romances and plays. She never restrained me in my choice, saying, she had always read everything she liked, and had never been injured by this indiscriminate reading, and she saw no reason why children should be wiser than their grandmothers. She was fond of hearing me read aloud to her, and all the long winter evenings, while she plied her knitting-needles, I amused her and delighted myself with the wildest and most extravagant productions. But there were some volumes, containing scenes so highly wrought, which excited such a thrilling interest in my bosom, I could not read them to another. These I reserved for my secret perusal; and, when summer built its green bowers, I used to conceal myself in their shades, and perusing alone these impassioned pages, forgetting every thing but the visions they inspired, I became a vain and idle dreamer. The realities of life were insipid to me; and I was happy only when breathing the atmosphere of the ideal world. My grandmother never reproved me for my wanderings. She did not seem to miss my companionship, for, in the genial season, she loved to sit in the open door and windows, and look at the flowers as they opened to the sunbeams, and listen to the songs of the birds as they made their nests in the trees that shaded the walls. I had one brother, two or three years older than myself, who always visited me during his college vacations, and transformed our

quiet dwelling to a scene of gaiety and amusement. Arthur was a light-headed, frolicsome youth, with a temperament very different from mine. He loved to sport with the foam of the ocean; I to fathom the depths of its waves. And now, Fanny, look on me no longer. I would not waver in my purpose, and I cannot bear that wistful gaze; it melts me, and I would have my eyes dry, and my heart firm. Poor Arthur came to us, the last year of his collegiate term, accompanied by a classmate, of whom he had often talked, Frederick Cleveland. I said he had often spoken of him; and to my romantic ear his name implied all those graces and accomplishments I had never yet seen embodied. Grave even to sensitiveness; pale almost to feminine delicacy; yet with a deep-toned voice and manly figure, he formed a striking contrast to my merry, blooming and boyish brother. Arthur pursued his accustomed sports, fishing and hunting; Cleveland soon learned to linger behind, finding more congeniality in my enthusiasm and poetry of feeling. He was a poet himself; and he loved to read his own strains to one who listened with an ear so rapt as mine. He was a naturalist; and as we walked together, he explained to me the wondrous laws of nature, and gave me enlarged and elevated views of the creating power. He was an astronomer; and as we stood beneath the starry heavens, he directed my gaze to the planets, walking in their brightness, and endeavoured to carry my soul into the depths of infinity, and teach it to take in some faint glimpses of God's unimaginable glory. Fanny, I thought not of my God, but of him. I forgot the Creator in adoration of the creature he had made. He departed, and existence was a blank to me; or rather, it was filled with one image, one ever multiplying yet never changing image. My first thought at morning was not an aspiration of gratitude to the Divine Being, whose wings of love had overshadowed and sheltered me during the darkness of night, but a remembrance of Cleveland. My last thought, when I closed my eyes in sleep, did not ascend to Him, in whose awful presence I might be ere the midnight hour, but lingered round one, a frail creature of the dust like myself. You asked me, Fanny, if love was sinful. Not that love which, emanating from a heart which conscious of its weakness and its dependence on God, sees in the object of its affections, a being of clay, yet an heir of immortality; a traveller of time, whose goal is eternity; not that love, which, purified from earthly fires, glows with a divine ardour and mingles with the celestial flame that rises from the soul to the source of everlasting love and light. But the pagan maiden, who pours out her life-blood at the feet of her idol god, is not more of an idolater than I was, the baptized daughter of a Christian mother. Winter glided slowly away. My grandmother's sight entirely failed, and I was compelled to become eyes to the blind, and also feet to the weary, for her increasing infirmities confined her to her arm-chair. I performed these duties, but with

a listless spirit; and, could she have looked upon me, she must have known that my thoughts were wandering. At length spring returned, and she had her arm-chair moved into the open air, and as the fragrance of the season floated round her, and its melodies breathed into her ear, she revived into child-like cheerfulness. The time for my brother's annual visit returned, and Cleveland once more accompanied him. Even now, when years gliding over years have dimmed the memories of the past, and religion, I trust, has sanctified them, I cannot recall those hours without a glow, like that of sunshine, pervading my wasting being. But the gloom, the horror of thick darkness that followed! One day, as Cleveland and myself were sitting at the foot of an elm tree, reading from the same book, Arthur passed us with his gun in his hand, his green hunting pouch swung over his shoulder, and his dog bounding before him. He laughed, looked back, called Cleveland a *drone*, then went gaily on. How long he was gone I know not, for the happy take no note of hours; but the sun was nearly setting, when he returned by the same path. I felt a sensation of embarrassment that I had lingered so long, and, looking at Cleveland, I saw the colour on his cheek was deepened. The sky was reddening with the clouds that generally gather around the setting sun, and their reflection gave a beauty and brightness to his face that I had never seen before. Arthur seemed animated with more than his usual vivacity. 'Cleveland,' said he, with mock gravity, 'that blush bespeaks the consciousness of guilt. I have long thought you a criminal, and you must now suffer the penalty due to your crimes. Die, then, base robber, without judge or jury.' Then, aiming his gun like an experienced marksman, his eye sparkling with mirth, he shot—and Cleveland fell."

Here Aunt Mercy paused, and a long silence ensued. I dared not look at her, as she thus bared the fountain of her grief. I felt as if the death-shot had penetrated my own heart. I started at the sound of her voice when she again resumed her narrative, it was so hollow and broken.

"Yes! he fell by a brother's hand. I saw him extended at my feet, and the grass crimsoned with the blood that gushed from the wound. I saw Arthur dash down his gun, rush forward, and throwing himself on the bleeding body, exclaim, 'Gracious Father! what have I done?' 'Done!' cried I, pushing him away with frantic violence, and clasp the murdered Frederick in my arms; 'Done! you have killed him—you have killed him;' and I reiterated the words till they became a piercing shriek, and the air was rent with my cries of agony. I remember how he looked; with what bloodless cheeks and lips he bent over him; what indescribable anguish and horror spoke from his eyes! I remember, too, how my blind old grandmother, roused by my shrieks, came groping to the spot, and dabbled her hands unconsciously in the blood of the victim. It was she who cried, 'he may yet be saved;' and Arthur

flew for a physician, and dragged him to the very tree, and looked him in the face, while he sought the symptoms of that life which was gone for ever. My Fanny, I dare not describe the madness of despair that took possession of my soul. I rejected all human consolation; I sought no divine comforter; I knew not that there was a balm in Gilead, or a heavenly Physician near. My poor grandmother tried to soothe my grief, but I turned away from her in bitterness. My brother attempted to approach me, but I fled from him as from a monster, and hid myself from his sight. He wrote to me, entreating me to forgive him. He painted the misery he endured, the remorse that was consuming him; and yet he was innocent, innocent of everything but levity, whose excess is criminal. He knew not that the gun was loaded; for a boy, who was hunting like himself, had taken his rifle, which he had left for a few moments leaning against a tree, and substituted his own in its stead. It was an instrument of inferior value, though of similar appearance, and contained a heavy load. These circumstances were afterwards made known to him, and explained the mystery of Cleveland's death. Poor, unhappy Arthur! he was innocent, and yet I loathed him. I made a vow that I would never see him more. 'Tell him,' said I, 'that I forgive him, but I can never live in his sight; I can never look upon him, but as the destroyer of all I held dear.' Finding me inexorable, he left me to my sullen and resentful sorrow to seek friends more kind and pitying. My sole occupation, now, was to wander abroad and seat myself under the elm tree which had witnessed the awful tragedy, and brood over its remembrance. Oh! how hard and selfish must have been my heart, that could have resisted the prayers and tears of my only brother; that could have turned from a doting grandmother, whose sightless eyes pleaded so painfully in his behalf; that could have left her to the care of menials, instead of ministering to her declining age and smoothing her passage to the grave! But that hard heart was yet to be broken. The prophet's wand was near; I received a summons to come to my brother who was dying. He raved for his sister; he could not die without seeing her once again; I felt like one waking from a terrible dream, in which the incubus had been brooding like a demon on the soul. A voice cried in my ear, 'Thou too wilt be a murderer, thou innocent than he, for thou knewest what thou wast doing.' I obeyed the summons, but it was too late; he was dead. I saw him in his winding sheet—the brother whom my unrelenting lips had vowed never to behold again; with his last breath he had called on my name, and prayed me to forgive him. I stood and gazed upon him with dry and burning eyes. The merry glance was dim and fixed; the glowing cheeks, sunken and white; and the smiling lips closed for ever. I had hung over the corpse of my lover, my bosom had been moistened by the life drops that oozed from his own, and I thought I had drunk the cup

of sorrow to its bitterest dregs. But I now learned that there were dregs more bitter still. Oh! the anguish of remorse; surely it is a foretaste of the undying worm, of the fire that never can be quenched; I could not bear its gnawings—its smothered, consuming flames; I was laid for months on a bed of sickness, in the same chamber where my poor Arthur breathed his last. I thought I was dying. I did not wish to live, but I recoiled from the dark futurity that stretched illimitably before me; I shrunk from the idea of a holy and avenging God; I, the unforgiving, could I hope for forgiveness? I heard, as it were, the voice of the Lord saying, 'The voice of thy brother's blood cries to me from the ground;' and I looked in vain for a city of shelter, where my soul could fly and live. I revealed to no one what was passing within. In the sullen secrecy of despair, I resolved to meet the doom which I believed irrevocable. Like the Spartan boy, who sat unmoved while the hidden animal was preying on his vitals, glorying in the pangs he had the fortitude to endure, I lay on my bed of torture silent and unrummuring; feeling that the agonies I suffered, and which I expected to suffer, as long as Almighty vengeance could inflict them, or the immortal spirit bear, were a sufficient expiation for my cruelty and guilt. I shudder, as I recall the workings of my soul; I looked upon myself as the victim of an uncontrollable destiny, of an omnipotent, vindictive Being, who, secure in his own impassibility, beheld with un pitying eye, the anguish he caused. Had I created myself? Had I asked for the gift of existence? Was mine the breath which had warmed the senseless dust of the valley with passions so fiery and untameable; or mine the power to restrain their devastating course? As well might I be responsible for the ruin caused by elemental wrath. Oh! Fanny, had I died in this awful frame! Had my rebellious spirit then been ushered into the presence chamber of the King of kings, thus blasphemous and defying! But he who remembers we are dust, who, tempted once himself, has pity on human weakness, gently withdrew his chastening hand. He raised me from my sick bed, and bid me live. I returned to my grandmother, who was now helpless as a child, and who wept like an infant when she heard my voice once more. The bible, the only book in her library which I had formerly passed over as too uninteresting to read, was now taken from its shelf and laid on the table by her bed-side; on my knees I read its sacred pages. With no teacher but the Holy Spirit, I prosecuted the sublimest study in the universe, and, as I studied, I felt a holy illumination pervading the darkened recesses of my soul. I saw myself in the mirror of eternal truth, in all my pride, rebellion, ingratitude, and heaven-daring hardness; and I loathed the picture. The more I abhorred myself, the more I adored the transcendent mercy of God, in prolonging my life for repentance and reformation. Like Mary, I arose and prostrating myself at the feet of the Saviour bathed them with

such tears of sorrow and love, it seemed as if my heart were melting in the fountain. I loved much; I felt as if I were forgiven; and ten thousand times ten thousand worlds would not purchase the hope even of that blessed forgiveness. My aged grandmother, too, placed as she was on the confines of two worlds, acknowledged that it had been reserved for that moment, for the power and glory of religion to be manifested in her soul; she had hitherto rested in quietude in the consciousness of a blameless life, but about to appear in the presence of infinite purity as well as justice, the life which had seemed so spotless, assumed a dark and polluted aspect, and she felt that if she ever joined the white-robed throng which surround the throne of the Everlasting, with branching palms in their hands, and hymns of glory on their lips, her raiments like theirs must be washed white in the blood of the Lamb. She died in peace, in hope, in faith, bequeathing me her little fortune, and what was more precious still, her blessing. Blessed, for ever blessed, be the God of Israel, that I have been so gently led down the declivity of life, and that I can hear without dismay the rolling of the waves of Jordan, over which my aged feet must shortly pass; and, blessed too be his holy name, that he has brought you hither to minister to my infirmities, listen to my feeble counsels, and close my dying eyes."

Aunt Mercy rose, laid her hand for a moment solemnly on my head, and retired. I had wept, without ceasing, during the latter part of her narrative, and, long after I had laid my head on my pillow, I continued to weep. I wept for the ill-fated Cleveland; the unhappy Arthur; for Aunt Mercy unrelenting and despairing, then, sorrowing and repenting; I wept to think what a world of tribulation I had entered, and prayed that I might never know the strength and tyranny of human passion. I had always thought it a fearful thing to die; but now it seemed more fearful still to *live* in a world so full of temptation, with hearts so prone to yield, surrounded by the shadows of time, which seem to us *realities*, and travelling on to an invisible world, which seems so shadowy and remote. The mystery of my being oppressed me, and I sought to fathom what is unfathomable, till I remembered the sublime interrogation of Scripture, "Who can find out the Almighty unto perfection? He is higher than heaven—what canst thou do? Deeper than hell—what canst thou know?" I acknowledged my presumption, and, humbled and submissive, felt willing to wait the great and final day of God's revealing.

The next morning, Aunt Mercy requested me to accompany her in a walk. It was a mild, sunny morning, and the breath of spring, floating over the hills, was beginning to melt the frosts of winter. I thought she was going on an errand of charity, till she turned into a path, to which the leafless shrubbery on either side now gave a dreary appearance, and led me to a tree, whose bare spreading branches bent over a rustic bench, that

was seen at its roots. I trembled, as I approached the spot, for I knew it was there the blood of Cleveland had been spilled. "This, then," thought I, "is the very tree, that witnessed, almost simultaneously, the vows of love and the tears of agony."

"Yes," said Aunt Mercy, as if I had spoken aloud, "this is the spot, where, more than fifty years ago, in the flower of youth, he fell. His body sleeps in the cemetery of his fathers, but this is his monument. Long as this aged tree remains, it will be sacred to the memory of Cleveland. Like that tree, now withered and shorn of its summer glories, I too stand a memento of his fate; but the spring will come to reclothe those naked branches, and pour the stream of vegetable life in their veins; and I too await the coming of that spring-time, whose flowers and verdure no after winter can blight." As I looked round me, the conviction that all that I saw was associated with Aunt Mercy's youth; that here her aged grandmother had lived, and she herself grown old; that here too I might grow old and die, was very solemn. Aunt Mercy, who always seemed to read my thoughts, explained to me all the changes which had gradually taken place. The inroads of time had been constantly repaired, so that it was the same cottage in appearance that had sheltered her in child-

hood. She had respected her grandmother's peculiar habits, and continued them, perhaps, in many respects unconsciously. The white livery which at first startled me from its singularity, but to which my eye had become accustomed, had been adopted by her predecessor, when her failing sight found it difficult to distinguish objects, and every thing darkened round her. "And I love to look upon white," continued Aunt Mercy; "I love the winter's snow for its whiteness. It reminds me of the blood-washed robes of the saints."

I would have lingered near a spot hallowed by such deathless memories, but Aunt Mercy drew me away. I trembled for the effect of such excitement on one so aged. I thought her face looked paler than usual, and her step seemed less firm. I placed the easy chair for her on our return, and stood by her with an anxious countenance. "Fanny, my love," said she, pressing my hand in both hers, "I have laid bare my heart before you, but the curtain must now fall over it—never again to be lifted. I have done with the past—God and eternity must now claim all my thoughts."

Perhaps at some future hour, I may continue my own history, as it is connected with my sister Laura's and the close of Aunt Mercy's life, a life continued beyond the allotted period of existence.

BARBARA.

The following pleasant little story is termed a frolic of fortune, but it is not so. It is the true and natural course of events. Patient toil, and faithful efforts in the performance of duty, never yet have gone unrewarded. There is no situation in life, however humble and obscure, in which we cannot make ourselves so useful to those around us, that they will be unwilling to part with us. Indeed, the humbler the lot of the individual, the easier it is in his power to rise in his situation, because the demand for fidelity in these situations is always in advance of the supply, and in each grade to which we rise, the competitor's increase; and a new stock of patience, energy and fidelity, are necessary. But after all, there is no situation, from the humble apple and candy stand in the street, up to that of the President of the United States, in which one who is always willing to work, to do kind offices for those around, to be prudent and rigidly faithful, can possibly fail to prosper. The world is apt to call those who thus gradually rise in their condition, lucky and fortunate. But it is only the reward which an early, untiring, earnest and honest performance of duty, will assuredly bring.—*Newburyport Herald*.

FORTUNE'S FROLICS.

A number of years ago, there came to reside in the city of Bath a worthy elderly gentleman and his wife; she was very nervous, and he was gouty. Having no children, they had begun to languish in the country; but now they had the pleasure of thinking the lady's nerves would be strengthened; and that the celebrated waters, combined with the celebrated doctors, would dislodge the gout. Leaving part of their establishment at Hillbury Lodge, they only brought with them their trusty, thrifty housekeeper, Mrs. Deacon, who had been almost from time immemorial in the family, and had the interest of her master and mistress at heart. After being comfortably settled at Bath, both the patients began to find the change of air beneficial to them, and with plenty of money, they did not want for society, Mr. Hillbury being exceedingly hospitable and fond of good living, of which the gout bore excellent testimony.

If matters went on placidly above stairs, it was more than could be said for the lower regions. "War to the knife" had been declared between Mrs. Deacon and every succeeding cook; for, in the space of a month, she had engaged and turned off three. The waste and extravagance of the Bath cooks were almost beyond belief. The pounds of butter that disappeared in a twinkling, the knots of sugar, the heads of cloves and nutmegs, were enough to drive a saint distracted,

and there was nothing but murmurs and complaints from day to day. The gold ear-rings and lace veils gave proof positive as to what purpose their plunder was devoted, and Mrs. Deacon believed, if there was one set of people above another that deserved condign punishment, it was the cooks of Bath. The worthy old couple were much annoyed by this long continued warfare, and the bitter complaints of the housekeeper, and they both agreed, that were it not for the cooks, Bath would be without a fault; and they were almost afraid to meet Mrs. Deacon in the morning with her list of grievances, and her schemes for bringing about reform.

At length, after a dreadful blow-up between Mrs. Deacon and Molly, the former wrought up to the highest pitch, and on the point of boiling over, come to announce to her master and mistress that another Bath cook was out of the question, and next morning she intended going off to Bristol, to see if she could find a girl there, that would suit her purpose. Leave was asked and obtained, and away drove Mrs. Deacon in the coach, and in due time was set down at the abode of an old friend of hers, the wife of a confectioner, and into her ear did Mrs. Deacon pour her many grievances. She not only sympathized with the afflicted housekeeper, but set on foot inquiries for a cleanly, good-tempered, active girl, who would do as she was desired, and, at length, the wished-for person was found in Barbara, or, as she was better known by the cognomen of Baby; her station was nothing higher than that of cleaning out the market every Saturday, where the old woman with whom she boarded kept a stall. By common consent, Barbara was pronounced a good steady girl, of whom no one knew any ill—hard working, and of a most civil, obliging temper. Mrs. Deacon was as pleased as possible at the favorable account given of Baby; so that, when a fat, fair, fresh colored damsel, with blue eyes, and light auburn hair, presented herself to the housekeeper, she was perfectly satisfied. No ear-rings, no curls dangling from each side of her face, but with tresses braided, and a neat mob cap, dark gown, and snow white handkerchief and apron. An arrangement was soon made, and Mrs. Deacon left Bristol in triumph with her treasure, bidding defiance to the cooks of Bath, from this time henceforth.

Mrs. Deacon was determined to make Baby a first rate cook, and, fortunately, she had good materials to work upon; for although Barbara was at first astonished at the variety of saucepans, stewpans, pots and kettles, of every sort and dimension, yet, by dint of attention, under Mrs. Deacon's management, she never needed to be twice told the same thing. The harmony that reigned above and

below was quite delightful to the old couple —no complaints of the insolence and extravagance of servants. Barbara was a treasure above all price. Four months after Barbara had entered her new service, the old lady was taken ill; she required constant attendance, and she was occasionally rather fretful. Mrs. Deacon did not feel herself equal to sitting up night after night. Barbara, who felt grateful to her benefactress, tendered her services, when she made herself so useful, that the old lady preferred her to Mrs. Deacon. Barbara was never sleepy; she was never seen with a frown upon her face, no matter how unreasonable her mistress might be; she never bounced about the room as the housemaid did, but walked in so cautious a manner that her step was not heard. In spite, however, of the celebrity of the Bath doctors, the old lady died, recommending Barbara to the care of the old gentleman, and in her will leaving her faithful attendant a handsome present. Such proofs of regard were enough to raise a little envy on the part of Mrs. Deacon, had not Barbara borne her prosperity in the meekest manner possible, and still continued her plain simple style of dress, and her modest demeanor.

Mrs. Deacon, soon after the death of her mistress, fell into bad health; her native air was recommended to her, and she set off for Devonshire, leaving Barbara to take care of her master, whose gout had been rather troublesome. But Barbara was so gentle in wrapping up his gouty foot, and so well adjusted his velvet shoe without giving him pain, that he began to consider Barbara as great a treasure as his wife had been. And he thought within himself, what would become of me if Barbara should leave me, or, if she should marry? and now I think of it, I suspect the grocer's foreman is looking after her. Barbara is good looking and sweet tempered.— Thus did the old gentleman cogitate day after day upon the possibility of Barbara leaving him, until at length he determined to make her his own, by the firmest of ties; and, to the damsel's astonishment, proposed to marry her. She had no particular attachment to any one, and they soon settled the affair, to the amazement of all Bath, which was in quite an uproar upon the occasion. If he had been a poor man nobody would have given themselves any trouble about him; but for the rich Mr. Hilbury to degrade himself, was scandalous.

Barbara was as good a wife as she had been a servant, and conducted herself so much to the satisfaction of her husband, that, at his death, which occurred some years after, he left all his wealth to his widow, who had in a short time admirers and lovers even amongst the nobility. One of those who had

been among the first to blame Mr. Hilbury for marrying, actually proposed for her hand; but she replied "that she knew that he only wanted her money; but, that when she did marry, it would be a man who would esteem and be kind to her." Barbara kept her word. She made a rational second choice, and enjoyed all the happiness her good conduct deserved.

BEN BLOWER'S STORY;

OR HOW TO RELISH A JULEP.

BY C. F. HOFFMAN.

"ARE you sure that's THE FLAME over by the shore?"

"Certing, manny! I could tell her pipes acrost the Mazoura."*

"And you will overhaul her?"

"Won't we though! I tell ye, Strannger, so sure as my name's Ben Blower, that that last tar bar'l I hove in the furnace has put jist the smart chance of go-ahead into us to cut off The Flame from yonder pint, or send our boat to kingdom come."

"The devil!" exclaimed a bystander who, intensely interested in the race, was leaning the while against the partitions of the boiler-room, I've chosen a nice place to see the fun near this infernal powder barrel!"

"Not so bad as if you were in it!" coolly observed Ben, as the other walked rapidly away."

"As if he were in it! in what? in the boiler?"

"Certing! Don't folks sometimes go into bilers, manny?"

"I should think there'd be other parts of the boat more comfortable."

"That's right; poking fun at me at once't; but wait till we get through this brush with the old Flame and I'll tell ye of a regular fixin scrape that a man may get into. It's true, too, every word of it—as sure as my name's Ben Blower."

"You have seen the Flame then afore, Stranger? Six year ago, when new upon the river, she was a raal out and outer, I tell ye. I was at that time a hand aboard of her. Yes, I belonged to her at the time of her great race with the 'Go-liar.' You've heern, mayhap, of the blow-up by which we lost it? They made a great fuss about it; but it was nothing but a mere fiz of hot water after all. Only the springing of a few rivets, which loosened a biler plate or two, and let out a thin spirting upon some niggers that had n't sense enough to get out of the way. Well, the 'Go-liar' took off our passengers, and we ran into Smasher's Landing to repair damages, and bury the poor fools that were killed. Here we laid for a matter of thirty hours or so, and got things to rights on board for a bran new start. There was some carpenter's work yet to be done, but the captain said that that might be fixed off jist as well when we were under way—we had worked hard—the weather was sour, and we need n't do any thing more jist now—

we might take that afternoon to ourselves, but the next morning he'd get up steam bright and airy, and we'd all come out new. There was no temperance society at Smasher's Landing, and I went ashore upon a lark with some of the hands."

I omit the worthy Benjamin's adventures upon land, and, despairing of fully conveying his language in its original Doric force, will not hesitate to give the rest of his singular narrative in my own words, save where, in a few instances, I can recall his precise phraseology, which the reader will easily recognize.

"The night was raw and sleety when I regained the deck of our boat. The officers, instead of leaving a watch above, had closed up every thing, and shut themselves in the cabin. The fire-room only was open. The boards dashed from the outside by the explosion had not yet been replaced. The floor of the room was wet and there was scarcely a corner which afforded a shelter from the driving storm. I was about leaving the room, resigned to sleep in the open air, and now bent only upon getting under the lee of some bulkhead that would protect me against the wind. In passing out I kept my arms stretched forward to feel my way in the dark, but my feet came in contact with a heavy iron lid; I stumbled, and, as I fell, struck one of my hands into the 'manhole,' (I think this was the name he gave to the oval-shaped opening in the head of the boiler,) through which the smith had entered to make his repairs. I fell with my arm thrust so far into the aperture that I received a pretty smart blow in the face as it came in contact with the head of the boiler, and I did not hesitate to drag my body after it, the moment I recovered from this stunning effect and ascertained my whereabouts. In a word, I crept into the boiler resolved to pass the rest of the night there. The place was dry and sheltered. Had my bed been softer, I would have had all that man could desire; as it was, I slept and slept soundly.

"I should mention though, that, before closing my eyes, I several times shifted my position. I had gone first to the farther end of the boiler, then again I had crawled back to the manhole, to put my hand out and feel that it was really still open. The warmest place was at the farther end, where I finally established myself, and that I knew from the first. It was foolish in me to think that the opening through which I had just entered could be closed without my hearing it, and that, too, when no one was astir but myself; but the blow on the side of my face made me a little nervous perhaps; besides, I never could

* The name "Missouri" is thus generally pronounced upon the western waters.

bear to be shut up in any place—it always gives a wild-like feeling about the head. You may laugh, Stranger, but I believe I should suffocate in an empty church, if I once felt that I was so shut up in it that I could not get out. I have met men afore now just like me, or worse rather—much worse. Men that it made sort of furious to be tied down to anything, yet so soft-like and contradictory in their natures that you might lead them anywhere so long as they did n't feel the string. Stranger, it takes all sorts of people to make a world! and we may have a good many of the worst kind of white-men here out west. But I have seen folks upon this river—quiet looking chaps, too, as ever you see—who were so teetotally *caranakteranakterous* that they'd shoot the doctor who'd tell them they couldn't live when ailing, and make a die of it, just out of spite, when told they *must* get well. Yes, fellows as fond of the good things of earth as you or I, yet who'd rush like mad right over the gang-plank of life, if once brought to believe that they had to stay in this world whether they wanted to leave it or not. Thunder and bees! if such a fellow as that had heard the cocks crow as I did—awakened to find darkness about him—darkness so thick you might cut it with a knife—heard other sounds, too, to tell that it was morning, and scrambling to fumble for that manhole, found it, too, black—closed—black and even as the rest of the iron coffin around him, closed, with not a rivet-hole to let God's light and air in—why—why—he'd 'a *swounded* right down on the spot, as I did, and I ain't ashamed to own it to no white-man."

The big drops actually stood upon the poor fellow's brow, as he now paused for a moment in the recital of his terrible story. He passed his hand over his rough features, and resumed it with less agitation of manner.

"How long I may have remained there senseless I do n't know. The doctors have since told me it must have been a sort of fit—more like an apoplexy than a swoon, for the attack finally passed off in sleep—Yes I slept, I know *that*, for I dreamed—dreamed a heap o' things afore I awoke—there is but one dream, however, that I have ever been able to recall distinctly, and that must have come on shortly before I recovered my consciousness. My resting place through the night had been, as I have told you, at the far end of the boiler. Well, I now dreamed that the manhole was still open—and, what seems curious, rather than laughable, if you take it in connection with other things, I fancied that my legs had been so stretched in the long walk I had taken the evening before, that they now reached the whole length of the boiler and extended through the opening.

"At first, (in my dreaming reflections) it was a comfortable thought that no one could now shut up the manhole without awakening me. But soon it seemed as if my feet, which were on the outside, were becoming drenched in the storm which had originally driven me to seek this shelter. I felt the chilling rain upon my extremities. They grew colder and colder, and their numbness gradually extended upward to other parts of my body. It seemed, how-

ever, that it was only the under side of my person that was thus strangely visited. I laid upon my back, and it must have been a species of nightmare that afflicted me, for I knew at last that I was dreaming, yet felt it impossible to rouse myself. A violent fit of coughing restored, at last, my powers of volition. The water, which had been slowly rising around me, had rushed into my mouth; I awoke to hear the rapid strokes of the pump which was driving it into the boiler!

"My whole condition—no—not all of it—not yet—my *present* condition flashed with new horror upon me. But I did not again swoon. The choking sensation which had made me faint, when I first discovered how I was entombed, gave way to a livelier, though less overpowering, emotion. I shrieked even as I started from my slumber. The previous discovery of the closed aperture, with the instant oblivion that followed, seemed only a part of my dream, and I threw my arms about and looked eagerly for the opening by which I had entered the horrid place—yes, looked for it, and felt for it, though it was the terrible conviction that it was closed—a second time brought home to me—which prompted my frenzied cry. Every sense seemed to have tenfold acuteness, yet not one to act in unison with another. I shrieked again and again—imploringly—desperately—savagely. I filled the hollow chamber with my cries till its iron walls seemed to tingle around me. The dull strokes of the accursed pump seemed only to mock at while they deadened my screams.

"At last I gave myself up. It is the struggle against our fate which frenzies the mind. We cease to fear when we cease to hope. I gave myself up and then I grew calm!

"I was resigned to die—resigned even to my mode of death. It was not, I thought, so very new after all as to awaken unwonted horror in a man. Thousands have been sunk to the bottom of the ocean shut up in the holds of vessels—beating themselves against the battened hatches—dragged down from the upper world shrieking, not for life but for death only beneath the eye and amid the breath of heaven. Thousands have endured that appalling kind of suffocation. I would die only as many a better man had died before me. I *could* meet such a death. I said so—I thought so—I felt so—felt so, I mean, for a minute—or more; ten minutes it may have been—or but an instant of time. I know not—nor does it matter if I could compute it. There *was* a time then when I was resigned to my fate. But, good God! was I resigned to it in the shape in which next it came to appal? Stranger, I felt that water growing hot about my limbs, though it was yet mid-leg deep. I felt it, and, in the same moment, heard the roar of the furnace that was to turn it into steam before it could get deep enough to drown one!

"You shudder—It *was* hideous. But did I shrink and shrivel, and crumble down upon that iron floor, and lose my senses in that horrid agony of fear?—No!—though my brain swam and the life-blood that curdled at my heart seemed about to stagnate there forever, still I *knew*! I was too hoarse—too hope-

less, from my previous efforts, to cry out more. But I struck—feebly at first, and then strongly—frantically with my clenched fist against the sides of the boiler. There were people moving near who *must* hear my blows! Could not I hear the grating of chains, the shuffling of feet, the very rustle of a rope, hear them all, within a few inches of me? I did—but the gurgling water that was growing hotter and hotter around my extremities, made more noise within the steaming caldron than did my frenzied blows against its sides.

“Latterly I had hardly changed my position, but now the growing heat of the water made me plash to and fro; lifting myself wholly out of it was impossible, but I could not remain quiet. I stumbled upon something—it was a mallet!—a chance tool the smith had left there by accident. With what wild joy did I seize it—with what eager confidence did I now deal my first blows with it against the walls of my prison! But scarce had I intermitted them for a moment when I heard the clang of the iron door as the fireman flung it wide to feed the flames that were to torture me. My knocking was unheard, though I could hear him toss the sticks into the furnace beneath me, and drive to the door when his infernal oven was fully crammed.

“Had I yet a hope? I had, but it rose in my mind side by side with the fear that I might now become the agent of preparing myself a more frightful death—Yes! when I thought of that furnace with its fresh-fed flames curling beneath the iron upon which I stood—a more frightful death even than that of being boiled alive! Had I discovered that mallet but a short time sooner—but no matter, I would by its aid resort to the only expedient now left.

“It was this—I remembered having a marline-spike

in my pocket, and in less time than I have taken in hinting at the consequences of thus using it, I had made an impression upon the sides of the boiler, and soon succeeded in driving it through. The water gushed through the aperture—would they see it?—No, the jet could only play against a wooden partition which must hide the stream from view—it must trickle down upon the decks before the leakage would be discovered. Should I drive another hole to make that leakage greater? Why, the water within seemed already to be sensibly diminished—so hot had become that which remained—should more escape, would I not hear it bubble and hiss upon the fiery plates of iron that were already scorching the soles of my feet?

“Ah! there is a movement—voices—I hear them calling for a crowbar—The bulkhead cracks as they pry off the planking. They have seen the leak—they are trying to get at it!—Good God! why do they not first dampen the fire?—Why do they call for the—the—

“Stranger, look at that finger! it can never regain its natural size—but it has already done all the service that man could expect from so humble a member—*Sir, that hole would have been plugged up on the instant, unless I had jammed my finger through!*

“I heard the cry of horror as they saw it without—the shout to drown the fire—the first stroke of the cold water pump. They say, too, that I was conscious when they took me out—but I—I remember nothing more till they brought a julep to my bed-side arterwards, *AND that julep!—*”

“Cooling! was it?”

“STRANNGER!!!”

Ben turned away his head and wept—He could no more.

Original.

CAROLINE RENTON.

A TALE OF THE REVOLUTION.

BY ROBERT HAMILTON.

CAROLINE Renton was the daughter of one of that hardy race of men who voluntarily renouncing their homes, and joining the ranks of independence, chose to suffer every hardship and danger to emancipate their native land from the yoke of tyranny. He was a native of the state of New-York, and had inherited from his father an estate of two hundred acres, on which, by industry and economy, he enjoyed all the comforts of life that a contented and unambitious spirit requires.

At the age of twenty-five, he married the daughter of a neighboring farmer, by whom he had the heroine of our story, an only child, remarkable for her beauty and intellect. With few advantages of education, for in those days of America, scholastic instruction was not to be obtained at almost any price in the rural districts of the Union, it was not to be wondered at if an individual possessing the rudiments of a plain education, was regarded by her less fortunate neighbors with a feeling of respect—such was the case with Caroline. Her father had been educated at one of the few seminaries then in New-York, by his parents, who intended him to follow one of the learned professions, but Edward Renton knew and felt that true independence

"Lord of the lion heart and eagle eye,"

was to be found only in the healthy and honest occupation of an American farmer, so returning to his home on the completion of his studies, he devoted his time and exertions to the improvement of the farm to which, at his father's death succeeding and marrying, as we have said, he became the father of Caroline, whose mind he carefully and assiduously cultivated. As she progressed in years, she also did in beauty and intelligence; and a lovelier maiden inhaled not the breezes of her native mountains. The symmetry of her form was faultless, and her features were cast in the mould of perfection. She had acquired among the country swains the title of "The Forest Rose," and well she deserved it, for her mind was as pure as the fragrance of that flower, and her cheek was its compeer in ruddiness. At the age of ten, he was by death deprived of her mother, and became at once the sole conductor of the household arrangements. Initiated thus young in the duties of home, removed far from the enervating and hollow society of cities, where the female mind is ever more or less impregnated with deceit and frivolity, she grew up in the midst of her native forests, a flower of beauty and of worth. When she had reached the age of fifteen, the love of independence, which so long had been smouldering in the hearts of freemen, burst forth—the trumpet of liberty pealed through every dell and forest, from peak to peak flew the tidings that a world had rent the shackles of despotism, and that the banner was given to the breeze under which stout hearts had rallied resolved to die rather than live the servile menials of a

foreign sway. Edward Renton was therefore among the first who flew to enrol himself in the patriot army—much as he loved his Caroline, he loved his country more, so, shouldering his rifle and bidding home and kindred adieu, he sought the American camp at Cambridge, and enrolled himself a soldier of his country.

We shall now for a time lose all sight of the patriot, for during seven years he shared in most of the conflicts and dangers of the Revolution. Left in sole possession of the farm, Caroline had sufficient to occupy her attention, and so assiduous was she in her management, that every thing was as remarkable for its correctness as though her father himself had been present. The plough was seen preparing the ground at the earliest visit of spring—summer smiled not on lovelier fields, and autumn crowned none with richer treasures, and when the hoary winter had told the husbandman to abandon his labors, Caroline was to be found sitting by her blazing hearth, knitting or attending to other domestic duties. So seldom did she receive tidings of her father, that she lived in a constant uncertainty of his being. In this state of seclusion and unprotectedness, and at the same time bursting into all the freshness of womanhood, it is not to be wondered at that she had many admirers among the youthful yeomen of the neighborhood; but to all their attentions she only respectfully and modestly attended, yet in such a winning manner and honied voice, as only to excite them to a stronger effort to secure her affections. Among them was Richard Dayton, the son of an Englishman, whose father was a staunch adherent to the royal cause, and who regarded all who expressed their wish for the liberation of their country, as traitors and fitting objects for the vengeance of the royalists. Among these, Caroline's father was particularly marked, and it was only in delicacy to the daughter that he had not already given information to the foreign minions to take possession of his estate. Richard Dayton naturally inherited an animosity to republican principles from his father, and never failed on every opportunity to express his sentiments for and hopes that the British arms should prove triumphant. To these expressions Caroline replied not—but the blood of indignation would mantle in her cheek, and with eyes upraised to heaven, in secretness of heart she would breathe a prayer that the cause of freedom would be extended over every mountain, forest, plain and valley of her beloved land. Richard Dayton was therefore not the favored being of Caroline's affections. One nobler in mind, although neither so rich or well-favored in person, had won her heart ere her father's departure—a young American who had joined the ranks of liberty and to whom Caroline had promised her hand should he ever return. His name was Henry Walworth, whose father's grounds adjoined those of Renton. From infancy they had grown up together, 'till their thoughts and feelings were congenial; while, by the parents, they were silently regarded as destined for each other. Young Dayton could easily perceive the partiality of Caroline for Walworth, and he rejoiced extremely when he embraced the cause of the *rebels*, as he sneeringly termed them, doubting not but that he would never return, or if he did

that he could easily denounce him to the British, who would rid him of his presence and permit him to follow his suit without a rival. Thus for three years had time sped on, but all the efforts and kindly attentions of Dayton failed to make a favorable impression on the heart of Caroline, while the gloomy intelligence which reached her respecting the fate of the patriot army, served only to make her dread in secret for the life of her parent and that of her lover, and to look forward to a hopeless and dreary existence.

One winter evening, when seated lonesome and spiritless in her little parlor, the domestics having retired to rest, a knock was heard at the door. Her heart sunk within her. Who could it be at such an hour? She listened—again the knock was repeated, and the voice of Dayton was heard, exclaiming—“Open, Caroline—it is I.”

A thousand surmises passed through her brain as to what could be the purport of his visit at so unwonted an hour, and rising and withdrawing the bolt she admitted him. His appearance denoted that he had ridden at a desperate pace, and without preface or ceremony, he demanded of her if she had heard the intelligence, while a glow of exultation passed over his features.

“No!” replied Caroline. “Is it of the army?”

“Yes!” he shouted, and throwing himself into a chair, held out to her a parchment on which was emblazoned in a red broad seal, the royal arms. “There, my pretty one, read. Rebellion and its defenders will soon meet with their just deserts,” and he laughed aloud.

“Tyranny and its defenders! say rather,” cried Caroline, snatching the document disdainfully from his hand, while the royal insignia fell on her eyes like the glance of a basilisk. She hastily unfolded it and read as follows—

“Whereas, Edward Renton and Henry Walworth, Americans of the State of New-York, having joined the rebel army, and fought against the forces of his most Gracious Majesty, George the Third, we, his representatives, do hereby commission our military and civil officers, at all hazards, to secure their persons dead or alive.

“Given under our hands and seals, this day, the 18th of February, 1781.

“CORNWALLIS, }
RAWDON.” }

Caroline looked pale—her breathing became short and thick—the fountain of the heart sent its waters to her eyes, ‘till her vision grew dim and vague, and she grasped at the air as if for support. Dayton beheld this and extended his arms to prevent her from falling—the touch of them seemed to recall at once her faculties, and she sprung from him as from a serpent about to fold her in its coils.

“Why have you brought this to me?” cried she indignantly.

“To tell you what will be the fate of your father if he returns not to his allegiance?”

“And to whom does he owe allegiance?” asked Caroline.

“To whom? Why to King George, to be sure,” answered Dayton.

“‘Tis false!” responded the maiden, in a voice of indignation. “To the King of Heaven only does he owe

allegiance—to human power never. Take back the despotic parchment. Go, tell the minions of authority that Edward Renton will never bend the knee but to his God!”

“Well said,” cried Dayton; “it is well Miss Caroline you are a female, otherwise your sentiments might have placed you in trouble.”

“And what though I am, sir! Be assured that every true American female will shed her blood in the defence of liberty, if her sons are not in numbers competent to repel their country’s invaders. But why bring that parchment here, sir? It concerns not me more than the other daughters of America. And why at such an hour seek to invade the dwelling of a lone woman, with tidings that only distract but cannot console!” Her feelings overcame her and she yielded to a flood of tears.

“Believe me, Miss Renton, I meant not to agitate you thus,” said Dayton, hypocritically; “but there is another in whose welfare I know you are deeply interested, and I thought that any tidings of him would be of—”

“Of whom speak you, sir?” cried Caroline, half divining his meaning.

“Of Henry Walworth!”

“Ah! is he alive—is he safe—is he victorious? speak, for God’s sake! and save my heart from breaking!”

“He is not alive!” responded Dayton; “he fell in the battle of Trenton!”

“Thank God he died for his country!” exclaimed the maiden, and she sank lifeless on the floor.

Dayton stood like the arch-fiend triumphant. He had sent the bolt of falsehood into her heart, and he regarded his victim with a cold malignant smile. As he lifted her fragile senseless form, even though white as a lily, he thought he had never seen her look so beautiful, and in a brutal feeling of exultation kissed her lips, which had never received the impress of human being since the departure of her father and lover, then placing her in a chair left the house, leaving her to recover as best she might. And when she did recover, every thing appeared to her as a dream. It was far advanced into midnight—the candle was waning in the socket, and the embers on the hearth were nearly extinguished—with difficulty she gained her couch, where cold and sorrowing, she fell into a deep and unrefreshing slumber.

Another year had passed and spring had come again. Nature, unmindful of the distracting strifes of man, began to array herself in her green robes of freshness. Caroline had now lost the bloom of her cheek, the fire of hope had vanished from her eye, and it was evident that her constitution was declining under the burden of suspense. “Hope deferred maketh the heart sick,” and acutely was the saying verified in Caroline. Added to her care and anxiety for her father’s safety, and the intelligence of her lover’s death, the King’s officers had notified to her that she must abandon her home, it was forfeited to the crown from her father’s aid, with the rebels. Whither to go she knew not. Those who would willingly have given her shelter, were terrified to harbor the daughter of a disaffected person.

Dayton thought that this would be a favorable opportunity to urge his suit, and he ventured again to mention it to her, but, it was only met with scorn and indignation.

"Heaven will not forsake me," said Caroline, "our Saviour knew not where to rest his head, and why should I repine?" and with this heavenly solace, and a firm resolution, she resolved to set out on foot to find her father in the American army.

It was a beautiful morning in sunny May, the blossoms hung in myriads of pearls on the trees. The early flowers were smiling in beauty and fragrance. The forests and groves were vocal with music, and all save man was happy and smiling in the presence of the Creator, when Caroline rose from her bed to bid adieu, perhaps for ever, to the home of her infancy. When she descended to the porch, around which the honeysuckle was twining its coral wreaths and the sweet roses filling the air with their balmy perfume, her heart swelled almost to bursting. The old and faithful watch-dog came leaping and fawning around her; many an hour had he been the companion of her rambles, and a kindred language of look was almost understood between them. She stroked his rugged coat, and tear after tear dropped from her eye.

"Poor Oscar," she cried, "we must part—who will be kind to thee when I am gone?"

"I will, Miss Caroline," cried an old faithful negro, who unseen had been regarding her at a distance. She started up at the sound of his voice, at the same moment several other domestics came around her, and the anguish of parting was at its full.

"Farewell, my kind friends!" she sobbed; "Be of good cheer, I feel that we shall meet again. Providence will not permit oppression to triumph. *'The seed of a great tree has been planted,'* which will spread its branches in shelter over the children of freedom, but should we never meet, do not forget poor Caroline."

The kind negro had brought from the stable a horse, and was busy in attaching it to a vehicle, in which he intended to convey his mistress some distance on her journey, when two ruffians, attended by young Dayton and his father, appeared and commanded him to desist.

"What for, massa?" asked the negro.

"It is the order of the King," said old Dayton.

"De King be damned—we hab no kings here, Massa Dayton—dis is Misass wagon, and I sall take it to gib her a ride on de road."

"Silence, you black scoundrel," cried the Englishman. "Do you not know you are speaking treason—desist, or I shall have you sent to limbo."

The negro continued in his operations, pretending not to hear them, and muttering to himself—"Black scoundrel—treason—limbo," while ever and anon an uncouth yet emphatic anathema against royalty was heard amidst his disjointed jargon.

At length old Dayton, losing all patience, walked up to the poor fellow, and dealt him a heavy blow across the shoulders with his walking-stick. The pain made him to cry most lustily—when suddenly, Oscar darted on the oppressor, dragging him to the earth and lacerating his arm severely. With difficulty was the in-

furiated animal taken from him, and but for the intervention of Carolino, the faithful dumb creature would have been sacrificed by the younger Dayton and the two ruffians of officers.

"Be pacified, sir!" said Caroline, "I seek not to carry from my home aught but a few necessities for my journey—they are here," pointing to a little bundle in her hand. "Your avaricious wishes shall be gratified—enjoy the fruits of your oppression—but be warned, the hour is not far distant when you shall tremble at the voice of retributive justice!"

"Pshaw!" cried the old royalist, "we want no canting here—the land is overrun with rebels and their children; a ripe harvest is now ready for the sickle. Hurrah for King George and his rulers."

Only his son and the two myrmidons of power responded to his expression, while Caroline turned upon him an eye of contempt—there was fire in its glance enough to have withered a hundred royalists—the fire of liberty, in whose flame, thrones, despots and oppression, shall yet shrivel, like "shrunk up symbols of annihilation."

Caroline received parting salutations from her friends who by this time had arrived, each tendering her some little token of remembrance. But her heart was full—she could not reply—and plucking a rose from a bush planted by Henry Walworth in her garden, and faintly articulating—"God bless you all!" rushed from her once happy home.

As we have said, it was a morning in sunny May, and all nature contributed to cheer the drooping heart—it was so with Caroline—she soon recovered her elasticity of spirits, and the cheering thought that she would shortly see her father, if alive, and perhaps Henry Walworth, for she could not believe the report of young Dayton altogether, made her pursue her journey joyously and vigorously. Inured from her cradle to the pursuits of rural life, she felt not the fatigue of the journey, and it was only when the sun was sinking behind the highlands of the beautiful Hudson, that she was reminded of the necessity of finding some place of shelter.

It was the first night that she had ever been doomed to pass from her native home and to seek the hospitality of strangers—we say hospitality, for in those times, refinement had not planted those convenient luxuries—hotels, in every section of the Union, and the traveller was obliged to depend upon the chance cottage of the settler or homestead of the farmer. Thus situated, Caroline began to look about her, and in a little dell off the road, from out a clump of trees, she beheld a blue wreath of smoke lazily curling into the golden sunset, giving signs of a habitation. Diverging from the main path, she directed her footsteps up a beautiful avenue of willows, which brought her in front of a plain substantial dwelling, built after the antique Dutch fashion, over which the ivy and other vines had woven a green and impenetrable mantle. A neat white-washed palisade surrounded the house and its garden, while at distance lay the different rooms which showed it to be the abode of some comfortable farmer. On the porch was seated

an old man, in whose silver locks and sunburnt features might be traced the marks of some sixty winters; he was quietly enjoying the soporific fumes of a large Dutch pipe, and was not aware of the approach of Caroline, 'till she stood before him. He started with surprise, exclaiming—

"Mien Gott, meichen, what bring you here?"

"To solicit the shelter of your roof 'till morning," said she, briefly.

"And thou shalt have it, mien meichen," cried the old Dutchman, rising and taking the hand of Caroline. "You be a pratty and gude maichen, and mein vrow shall make you very welcome. Come in—come in—Peter Deuchsten never shut da door against da traveller."

He then conducted her into a plain and comfortably furnished apartment, and his "old vrow" entering, made Caroline at once welcome and at home. A healthy and substantial repast was placed before her, and in the kindly society of the old couple, she almost forgot her sufferings and deprivation of home. In the midst of their conversation she had related to them her troubles, and the name of Mienheer Renton being familiar to the farmer and his wife, they expressed their willingness to afford her every protection 'till the result of the war was decided.

"You shall be mien daughter, mien child—and not a tyfil of a red coat shall offer you one harm," said the old man affectionately. "Mien son has gone to fight for his faderland, and you shall be mien child 'till he return," and lifting a large massive goblet, he drank—"Success to Vashington! de fader of his peoples!"

"Amen!" sweetly and fervently responded Caroline, while the old dame added—

"And confushion to da royalishts!"

"Ha! ha! dat ish good, mien vrow—'tish a great pity dat you vash not a soldier, you would have been der tyfil in der battle."

"Hollo, house! where the devil are you all?" shouted a voice at the porch.

Caroline started to her feet, breathlessly exclaiming, "'Tis he—where, where shall I hide me?" and clasped the old man's hands firmly in her's.

"Who der tyfil be *he*?" asked Peter Deuchsten.

"My oppressor, Dayton, he that I told you had driven me from my home."

"Der villain! me shall kill him—bring me der rifle, vrow," and he was about to seize the weapon which his spouse had promptly taken from the wall at his command.

"Oh! no, no," cried Caroline, "shed not his blood, but save me from his sight—lead me at once to the chamber where I am to pass the night."

"In the name of King George, open I tell you! What have I alighted upon a nest of rebels?" cried Dayton, enforcing his commands with the butt end of his whip upon the porch. "Open I say!"

"Have patience mien friend—I shall not open mien door 'till I am ready, for all der Kings in Christendom; der stable ish open, you will find good shelter dere—hers vrow, take care of der meichen, and leave me to

settle with da man," and the old lady conducting Caroline to her own room, Peter hobbled coolly to the door.

"Hollo!" said the infuriated Dayton, "why did you keep me waiting so long, old boy?"

"Because it vash mien plaishur, young boy," answered Peter.

"Do you know who I am, sirrah?"

"Maybe I dosh!" said Peter coolly, puffing a strong volume of smoke into the face of Dayton.

"I am a messenger in the service of his Gracious Majesty, King George, the Third," pompously spoke Dayton.

"I am shorry to hear dat," said the Dutchman, "I vish dat you served a better mashter."

"Why, you old Dutch rebel, do you dare to speak treason thus in my presence?"

"Donner and blitzten, and who der tyfil care for your preshence, or der preshence of der King himself?" shouted Peter. "I am Peter Deuchsten, dish is my dwelling, and I knows no kings nor der servants here."

Dayton saw at once that he had alighted upon one who was not to be intimidated neither by his braggadocio or the authority of royalty, and lowering his tone respectfully begged shelter for himself and horse until the morning.

"You shall have it for der sake of humanity," said Peter, "though I do not love der cause you followah," and he pointed out to him the stable, where Dayton having secured his horse, returned to the parlor.

"You appear to be no friend to the royal party!" said Dayton, seating himself at the table, and partaking of the remains of the repast which had been interrupted by his arrival.

"Nien," replied Peter, doggedly.

"I am sorry to hear that, my old boy."

"And for what der tyfil are you sorry?" asked Peter.

"Because you will have to relinquish your property to his Majesty, since you side with the rebels."

"I tink his majesty will have to relinquish his property himself," said Peter, "if all tales be true."

"Lies, my old friend, lies, believe me!"

"But I am not your friend, nor do I believe dem lies," said Peter, and he drained down another draught of *skedam* from the silver goblet.

"Come," said Dayton, seizing the goblet, "I shall give a toast—*Here is the health of King George, and success to his arms, both by land and sea!*"

"No such toast shall be drunk in mine housh," cried Peter, snatching the goblet from his hand.

"Ah! ha!" said Dayton, "this is flat rebellion; you shall repent this."

"Leave mine housh," cried the Dutchman, "least mine housh; you insult mien hospitality."

"Hospitality be damned," said the bullying Dayton.

"This house is mine, and I shall not quit it 'till it is my pleasure."

"Fluch and blitzten!" cried the old man, "we shall see who is der master," and seizing his rifle, presented it at the breast of Dayton. A loud scream was heard

in the adjoining apartment, and the next moment Peter's wife, followed by Caroline, rushed into their presence.

"So so, Miss Renton, you follow up your principles bravely. You have left your own home for rebellious dealings, and I now find you sheltering in the very temple of treason," said Dayton.

"In the temple of peace and independence, which you, sir, want to turn into a den of strife and bloodshed."

"Excellent! beautiful; sentiment and eloquence combined!" exclaimed the coxcomb, but we shall have plenty of food for the gallows by and bye. I am now on my way to the royal camp with despatches; I shall not fail to report my reception here. It was my intention to have passed the night here, but I fear my life would be the penalty before morning. Good night, my hoary rebel. Miss Dayton, your servant. You shall be well taken care of," said the villain, significantly, and he proceeded to quit the dwelling.

A clattering of horses' feet was now heard on the road, and glimpses of military costume discernible occasionally through the trees in the last rays of evening. Shouts and laughter also broke nearer and nearer upon the ear, 'till a young man dashed up the avenue, followed by two others. "Father!" shouted he as he leaped from his steed, and rushed up the porch. "Father, our arms are victorious—our country is free. Liberty is proclaimed throughout the land—tyranny has perished!" and he fell upon the breast of Peter.

"Mien boy! mien boy!" cried the old man, "welcome to your fader's heart."

"And to his mother's also," said the old dame, who clasped him in her arms, and covered his manly cheek with kisses.

Dayton stood paralyzed. The two others approached. "Bid welcome to my companions in arms," said young Walter Deuchsten—Mr. Renton and Henry Walworth."

"Oh! God, my father," screamed Caroline, and fell senseless upon the floor. In the next moment she was in the arms of her father, and Henry hanging over her affectionately.

"Not so fast, mien very good friend," said Peter to Dayton, seizing him by the collar, for he was sneaking away; "not so fast." Here are a few of your favorites, der rebels; how like you der appearance?"

Dayton spoke not a word, and Caroline reviving, was embraced tenderly by Henry; when looking round her, as almost waking from a dream, she beheld Dayton. "Ah! he here?" exclaimed she. "Thank Heaven, I am now safe from his persecution," and she sobbed bitterly on her lover's bosom.

"From whose, my Caroline?" inquired Henry.

"From his, that bad man, Dayton, who led me to believe that you were numbered with the slain, and by whose machinations and those of his father's, I was this morning driven from my home."

"Villain!" exclaimed Renton—and at the same moment Walworth demanded why he had thus acted,

Dayton could not reply, but he stood a trembling and guilty thing.

"But he has despatches," said Peter, "for the enemy."

"We have no enemies now," said Walworth; "peace is proclaimed, but let us see what is their import; produce your papers, Mr. Dayton."

"Never," cried Dayton, as he pulled a pistol from his pocket—"never, but at the sacrifice of life."

"Rash man!" said Walworth, "resistance is in vain; deliver them quietly; no harm shall befall you, I pledge my honor."

Dayton replied not, but making one bound from the porch to the ground, he mounted one of the horses of the party, and dashing his spurs up to the rowels in the flanks of the animal, like a flash of lightning sped up the avenue, then turning in his saddle, he discharged his pistol, the ball of which slightly grazed the breast of Peter. The rifle was yet in the hand of the old man, which he had seized to discharge at Dayton, when he was prevented by his wife and Caroline. "Tyfil—traitor—craven," he shouted, and the short quick crack of the piece succeeded the exclamation. A shrill cry was heard, Dayton was seen to spring into the air, and falling from the horse, was dragged along by the foot in the stirrup for a considerable distance. When discovered, he was a mutilated mass; the ball had entered his temple, and the blood flowing freely, his countenance was clotted with gore and dust, presenting a hideous appearance. His obsequies were brief—a pit dug by the road side received his remains. On examining his papers, they were found to contain secret information for the enemy, but they would have proved of no avail, as the surrender of Cornwallis had established the reign of Freedom. The next day, Renton, with Caroline, accompanied by Walworth, departed for his home, which for many years he had not beheld. His appearance, it may be supposed, was unexpectedly unwelcome to old Dayton, who received a prompt and imperative demand to surrender up his estates and effects to the American government, as one who had long been noxious to their cause. Between Walworth and Renton, they were divided, in consideration of their long and dangerous struggles in the emancipation of their native land, and Caroline, according to her promise, bestowing her hand upon Walworth, lived to behold her daughters, beautiful and virtuous as their mother, and her sons inheriting the bravery and patriotism of their sire.

CHOICE ANECDOTES.

THE OLD SOLDIER'S RULE.—If you would have friends, you must show yourselves friendly. I know an old soldier of the Revolution, who told me the following story:—

"I once had a neighbor, who, though a clever man, came to me one bright hay day, and said, 'Squire White, I want you to come and take your geese away.' 'Why?' said I, 'what are my geese doing?' 'They pick my pigs' ears when they are eating and drive them away; and I will not have it.' 'What can I do?' said I. 'You must yoke them.' 'That I have not time to do, now,' said I; 'I do not see but they must run.' 'If you do not take care of them, I shall!' said the clever shoemaker, in anger; 'what do you say, Squire White?' 'I cannot take care of them now, but I will pay you for all damages.' 'Well,' said he, 'you will find that a hard thing, I guess.'

"So off he went, and I heard a terrible squalling among the geese. The next news from the geese was that three of them were missing. My children found them horribly mangled and dead, and thrown into the bushes.

"Now, said I, all keep still, and let me punish him. In a few days the shoemaker's hogs broke into my corn. I saw them, but let them remain a long time. At last I drove them all out, and picked up the corn which they had torn down, and fed them with it in the road. By this time the shoemaker came in great haste after them.

"'Have you seen any thing of my hogs?' said he. 'Yes, sir, you will find them yonder, eating some corn which they tore down in my field.' 'In your field?' 'Yes, sir,' said I; 'hogs love corn, you know—they were made to eat.' 'How much mischief have they done?' 'O, not much,' said I.

"Well, off he went to look, and estimated the damage to me, to be equal to a bushel and a half of corn.

"'O, no,' said I, 'it can't be.' 'Yes,' said the shoemaker, 'and I will pay you every cent of damage.' 'No,' I replied, 'you shall pay nothing. My geese has been a great deal of trouble to you.'

"The shoemaker blushed, and went home. The next winter when we came to settle, the shoemaker determined to pay me for my corn. 'No,' said I, 'I shall take nothing.'

"After some talk we parted; but in a day or two I met him in the road, and we fell into conversation in the most friendly manner. But when I started on, he seemed loth to move, and I paused. For a moment both of us were silent. At last he said, 'I have something laboring on my mind.' 'Well, what is it?' 'Those geese. I killed three of your geese: and I shall never rest till you know

how I feel. I am sorry.' And the tears come in his eyes. 'O, well,' said I, 'never mind; I suppose my geese were provoking.'

"I never took any thing of him for it; but whenever my cattle broke into his field, after this, he seemed glad—because he could show how patient he could be.

"Now, said the old soldier, conquer yourself, and you can conquer any thing. You can conquer with kindness where you can conquer in no other way." - *Vermont Chronicle*.